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# 25+2 electoral models

## I. Electoral Systems

# 2012

## electoral models

### I. Electoral Systems

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# Introduction- The characteristics of electoral systems

The quality of the political representation depends on technical aspects such as the electoral system, the party system and the way the government is formed. However, the electoral system is crucial to the change of the popular vote into representation in parliaments or in other chosen institutions. It influences the running of the party system, which, in its turn, brings forth the characteristics and the stability of governments.

In Romania, as well as in other countries, the dilemma of the majority- proportional system rules the dispute regarding the change of the electoral system. The ambiguity of the term 'single member constituency voting', used in public debates, on the most adequate electoral system, suggests a hostile attitude towards the party lists. Most often, the single member constituency voting actually refers to a majority procedure, the single-winner constituency, which functions based on the 'First Past the Post' formula. In its most simple meaning, this system assumes that there is only one disputed seat in each constituency and that each voter has one vote only. But the majority system is not only a single member constituency voting, the same as the proportional system does not necessarily assume the party list system. However, the majority systems are most often single member constituency systems. Yet, by allowing the emergence of some secure majorities and, consequently, of some powerful governments, this system leads to the lack of representation of that part of the voters who balloted against the winning candidate or list.

More democratic than the majority system, the proportional representation allows a better representation of the voters' opinion, yet raises serious inconveniences concerning the stability and the authority of governments. Emerging as a reaction to the majority system at the end of the XIXth century, the proportional representation is to be found under one form or another in most European states, only Great Britain and France, still putting into practice the majority formula. But if proportional representation allows a better representation of the voters' opinion, it has serious inconveniences, on the other hand, regarding the stability and the authority of governments. Such

effects as the exponential multiplying of parties due to the maintenance of old political forces simultaneously with the emergence of new ones, corresponding to the new social or cultural divisions, lead to the rise of the system of coalition governments and to governmental instability (such as the case of Italy up to 1994). Thus, there were introduced a series of majority procedures which moderated the effect of absolute proportional representation, such as the electoral threshold, the majority bonus, the voter's preferential selection of the candidate or even the personalized selection of candidates.

On the other hand, the merge of the majority and the proportional systems, lead to the development of the mixed system which can also solve, in an acceptable manner, both the issue of minority representation in the legislative bodies, and the formation of the majority necessary for secure governing. Having two votes, one in a list voting scrutiny and the other in a single member constituency scrutiny, the voter can back specific interests, but can also support majority trends with the help of the single member vote. The extent to which the report between the proportional component and the majority one differs within a mixed system differentiates within a balanced mixed system, meaning a relatively majority mixed system or a relatively proportional one. The mixed system which, in different proportions, merges the two types of the above-mentioned voting systems seems to acceptably solve both the issue of voters' representation in legislative bodies and the formation of the majority necessary for secure governing.

The electoral system is not impartial. In accordance with the context, it influences the party system. Hence, a classical representative of the party theory, Maurice Duverger, considered that the type of voting has the role of 'an almost sociological law'. To the French political scientist, 'the majority voting in a first round strives for the party duality'<sup>1</sup> and 'the majority voting in the two rounds or the proportional representation strives for a multi-parties formula'<sup>2</sup>. Especially in the last two decades, this classification was criticized<sup>3</sup> both from the perspective of empirical studies and that of

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<sup>1</sup> Maurice Duverger, *Les partis politiques*, (Paris: A.Colin, 1979) 307.

<sup>2</sup> *ibidem.*, 331.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel-Louis Seiler, *Partis et familles politiques*, (Paris: PUF, 1983) 33-51.

methodology, yet, despite the obvious amendments, it remains still present.

One of the less debated consequences of the change of the electoral system is to assign the single member constituencies. The structure of the current parliament allows the most important parties to settle this issue according to their electoral basis.

The 'Gerrymandering' technique, by which the delimitation of the constituencies is accomplished in order to maximize the parties' chances to government and/or of those without whom the decision of changing the electoral system cannot be taken, unveils another dimension of the people's interest to alter the type of voting.

Under the terms of the alarming lessening of trust in political institutions (parties, the Parliament, the Government), symptom of the actors' lack of legitimacy, the reform of the electoral system can be a mechanism of re-establishing the political and the institutional equilibrium. As simple instruments, the electoral systems are only one of the elements necessary for a real and efficient change of the Romanian political system, since their proper function depends not only on numerous other variables such as tradition, social structure, specific cleavages, but also on the capacity of the political class to assume the role of agent of change. After several alternations in government, under the mandates of the tendency to polarize between the two, the current political moment seems to be favorable to fierce debates on the role of political institutions. Not only the electoral system but also other institutional adjustments (the alteration of the Senate's basis of representation which should become, as it is the case of most Occidental countries, a representative of the local groups, or the acknowledgment of some legislative options that would allow a secure representation of women in political institutions, by introducing some mandatory quotas) are to be accomplished.

## 1. Types of electoral systems

The elections represent the basic principle of representative democracies. They ensure the political legitimacy without which democratic government cannot be efficient. Technically speaking, the method by which votes are changed into seats defines voting. Therefore, there are three large families of voting systems that are accepted: the majority voting system, the proportional representation system and the mixed system.

### 1.1. The majority vorin system

The term 'majority' refers to the method by which, within a constituency, the candidate or the list of candidates that has the most votes, with or without absolute

majority, is declared to be the winner.

This type of voting system has an old origin. The relative majority system (the one-round voting system) is used, almost natural thanks to its simplicity: when a responsible is chosen or when a delegate is declared to be the winner provided that he obtained the most votes. Apparently, the absolute majority appeared later under the influence of the Catholic Church. As the Church had been for a long time in favor of the unanimity rule (elections were seen as a means of expressing the divine wish, and since this could be only one, the voter did not exercise a right, but a function), it was necessary to dispose of it because minorities could not be legitimate points of view. Although getting unanimity was not impossible, since the minorities were rallied to the majority, the Church set new rules regarding the absolute majority or the qualified majority, especially the 2/3 majority. The spreading of the model was due to the its embracing by the secularists, who, back in the Middle Age, sometimes asked for the help of the Church to organize the elections. Searching for the qualified, the absolute or the 2/3 majority, meaning the several round type of voting system, actually means searching for the inaccessible unanimity. The second round type of voting system is the synthetic expression of this method of disposing of the absolute majority, though, in fact, it is only a way of simplifying the voting system with an infinite number of rounds, applied for the election of the Pope or of the system put into practice in France during the Third or the Fourth Republics for the election of the president by the Congress (The National Assembly and the Senate reunited). Moreover, in France where this type of voting system was founded back in 1789, the third round type of voting system was used for the election of the deputies of the Third Social Category.

With this model in mind, due to the emergence of the representative parliamentary systems, it was created the methodological framework for the organization of the single member constituency voting system, with either one or two rounds. A strong argument was the simplicity of the system as:

- a. the political conflict was individualized;
- b. several competitors took part in it individually;
- c. the electoral constituencies were relatively small and allowed the better knowledge of the candidate;
- d. the winner was the one who obtained the most votes.

Both the advantages and the disadvantages of the majority voting system are evident from these characteristics. Although it ensures an individualized elected-voter connection, it does not allow the representation of those who did not vote for the winner. Even if the elector can make a lucid and accurate analysis of the candidate's offer and capacity, the tactical vote (as well as the useful or the protest one) limits his freedom of chose. And even though in this type of voting system the candidate is much better



known to his voters, the political character of the representation diminishes. The simplicity of the system is not compensated for its disproportion.

On the other hand, as far as the several round type of voting system is concerned, if the first round is highly conflictive, the second round requires the constituting of some ad hoc alliances or even of some further coalitions in the government. And not always is the constituting of such alliances based on the relations and similarities of the political agenda of those who make such alliances.

The majority list voting system (the representation party list system) in one or two<sup>4</sup> rounds, replaces the candidate with a list of people nominated by each party or coalition, but the 'first past the post' principle is not affected. The list voting system means that there are several seats to allot in each constituency, the voter having the same number of votes (provided that he cannot grant several votes to the same candidate). This type of voting system usually assumes blocked lists<sup>5</sup>. *The preferential vote* is an extension of this system, allowing the voter to intervene and change the order of the candidates nominated by the parties, as well as the ranking which allows the voter to create his own list by taking candidates from the lists forwarded by the parties.

The effects of the one round list voting system in turning the votes into seats are more negative in their magnitude than those of the single member constituency voting system.

## 1.2. The party-list proportional representation

As opposed to the precedent system, the party-list proportional representation not only allows the representation of the majority but also that of the minorities. Thus, both political and cultural options-religious, linguistic and ethnic -can be expressed. In accordance with this system, the parliamentary mandates can be divided to candidates proportionally to the votes obtained from the elections, so there is a proportional report between the parliamentary mandates obtained by each political party and the votes that the electors gave to these parties.

The party-list proportional representation usually entails the use of the lists of candidates. Within this system, the mandates are allocated proportionally with the number of votes obtained by the parties that take part in the elections. Therefore, the most important issue raised by the party-list proportional representation resides in the manner the mandates are allocated.

The democratic aspirations following the end of the First World War created the favorable climate for the party-list proportional representation. It won over, in turn, Netherlands in 1917, Norway, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia and Romania in 1919, or Ireland in 1921. After 1945, the proportional voting system was also established in the countries freed from the Nazi or fascist rule: even France adopted this system for a short while between 1945 and 1986. Germany is another example of an important country where a party-list proportional representation system was chosen (even though it assumes two ways of combined voting system, which includes it, according to certain classification criteria, in the category of mixed systems). After the fall of the dictatorships in the south of Europe, Greece (1974), Portugal (1975), and then Spain (1977) preferred the party-list proportional representation and started using this system. Not at all surprising, the collapse of the communist regime in Eastern Europe presumed the embracing of proportional systems in Romania (1990), Bulgaria (1991), Poland (1991), The Czech Republic or Slovakia (1993), Slovenia (1991) etc.

### 1.2.1. Majority constraints: the electoral threshold and the electoral prize

If the first proportional systems were integral, allowing the representation of all candidates who exceeded the electoral quota, the dispersal of votes lead to the search for new methods that would adjust the negative effects. In some cases the solution for the limitation of political fragmentation was the electoral threshold, either on national level, or constituency level, expressed in percentages of the cast votes. This threshold oscillates between 1% and 8%, usually with an average of 3% in Spain and 5% in Germany and Romania. However, the enforcement of the electoral threshold affects the proportionality of the system, reaching almost majority disproportions such as the case of Bulgaria, where a threshold of 4% caused the exclusion of representation for almost ¼ of the cast votes (24.9%) or in Romania, at the 2000 elections when the disproportion was of over 20%.

The majority bonus represents a prize, expressed in seats which are awarded to the parties that obtain a proportion of the votes. In accordance with the 1926 Romanian electoral law, the parties that obtained 40% of the votes were automatically allotted 50% of the mandates and a number proportional to the votes obtained from the rest of 50%.

### 1.2.2 Derogation from the electoral threshold principle

The proportional systems allow a better representation of the minorities. However, with or without an electoral

<sup>4</sup> Nowadays used in the Mauritius Island for the election of the legislative Chamber. See P. Martin, p.58.

<sup>5</sup> This system was used in Turkey from 1950 to 1957 and it is still used nowadays in USA for the appointment of the President; the electors vote the Great electorates and not the candidates who run for the presidency.



threshold, some minorities cannot accede to representative institutions. In order to rectify this situation in some culturally fragmented states, formulas of representing the minorities are being proclaimed for those who derogate from the electoral threshold. The adopted solutions are the fixed quota granted ex officio (such as it is the case of the Flemish minority in the regional parliament of Brussels) or the allocation of one seat to the ethnic minority which did not obtain results superior to the electoral threshold (as in Romania).

### **1.2.3 Methods of turning the votes into mandates**

#### *1.2.3.1 The quota methods*

There are several methods of allocating the mandates. The first one is that of the electoral quota. It expresses the number of votes required to obtain a term. Although this can also be established previous to the organization of the elections, it is most often calculated after the counting of votes in an electoral constituency, as the result of the division of the number of votes validly cast to the number of mandates. The number of votes cast on every list is divided to this quota and every time the quota appears in this number, an equal number of mandates is allocated to the list. As for the independent candidates, they must obtain a number of votes at equal to the electoral quota in order to in acquire a term. With the help of this operation, only some of the mandates are allocated since both a number of votes are not cast and a number of mandates are not allotted. The allocation of the remaining mandates and cast of the remainder of the votes (called electoral remainders) are carried out through certain methods such as *the largest remainder method* or *the highest average method*.

The methods of allocating the mandates distinguish themselves both due to the manner of calculating the quota but also to the manner of allotting the seat. The simplest quota (Q) is the result of the report between the number of votes validly cast in each constituency (V) and the number of the allocated seats (L). This simple Quota is called the Hare quota. Other quotas that are used are the Hagenbach-Bischoff quota ( $Q=V/(L+1)$ ), the Droop quota ( $Q=V/(L+1)+1$ ) and the Imperiali quota ( $Q=V/(L+2)$ ). After the quota has been established, a method for the allocation of those seats that were not allotted by quota is chosen.

Next, in order to exemplify, we are going to present two situations of allocating the mandates, the first, for individual candidates and the second, for the party list system.

#### *A. The individual candidates voting system*

The single transferable vote or the Hare system was the first used proportional system even though in the beginning it was not used for political elections. It is a quota system, but a very particular one. If the method is complex for the organizers of the voting, it has the

advantage of being easy to enforce by the voters. One of the essential conditions is for the Hare system to be used in constituencies with a small number of seats (3-5) to allocate, by using individual candidates. Each voter must rank the candidates in the electoral constituency according to his preference, as in the case of the alternative single member constituency voting systems, including in the 'top' those candidates who represent different parties. All candidates who reached the quota are declared to be elected (the Droop quota is used). If a candidate goes over the quota, the further votes are divided among the other candidates in accordance with the next preferences. If, after the counting of votes, no candidate obtained a number of votes equal to the quota and there are seats left to allocate, the candidate on the last position is eliminated and his votes are transferred to the other candidates, taking into consideration the next preferences on the eliminated candidate's ballot papers. Non-transferable votes may be lost because the voters are not required to have more than one preference in order for the ballot papers to be valid. If, in the end, there are only two candidates left for one seat, the one who has more votes transferred receives the seat even if he does not reach the quota.

#### *B. The party list system*

As far as the party list system is concerned, there are methods of turning the votes into seats:

- the largest remainder method;
- the highest averages method;

#### *The largest remainder method*

The simple quota is used for this method and the rule of the largest remainder is use for the unallocated seats. This method is used for small parties. However, it has an inconvenience as it can lead to mathematical paradoxes that result from the strange evolution of the remainders.

#### *The highest averages method*

The simple quota is applied and each unallocated seat is allotted successively to each list, adding to the already obtained seats. The report between votes and seats is calculated for each list. The seat is allocated to that list that has the highest average of votes per seat. This method clearly favors large parties. It is valid in Spain, Portugal, Island, Israel, Netherlands, Finland, Turkey, Bulgaria, Estonia and Romania.

#### *1.2.3.2. The divisor methods*

The general principle of these methods (similar to the highest average method) consists in the successive division of the number of votes obtained by every list in the constituency through a series of numbers, called divisors. The seats are allocated to the lists according to the highest numbers obtained at the end of this operation.

#### *The d'Hondt method*

The best known method of determining the allocation of seats, devised by the jurist and mathematician Victor d'Hondt in 1878 and used in 1899 is a type of the highest average method. In accordance with the Victor d'Hondt method, the series of divisors is formed by integer numbers such as 1, 2, 3, and 4...n. Each party taking part in the elections has an average of votes established by dividing the votes that need to be allocated to 1, 2, and 3...n mandates to be allotted. Under this method, voters do not choose a candidate but vote for a party, each of which has a published list of candidates. The party winning the highest average is awarded the mandate. The result is favorable to large parties and unfavorable to small parties.

#### *The Sainte-Lague method*

This method, proposed by French mathematician André Sainte-Laguë, uses as divisors 1, 3, 5, 7,...n. This method is less unfavorable to small parties than the previous one and does not have the mathematical paradoxes of the largest remainder method, and is always preferred to the latter. It seems to be the most adequate for the distribution of seats to an assembly within the geographical units (federal states, departments) since it does not disfavor small units.

#### **1.2.4. The single member constituency voting system**

Although apparently hard to understand, there are yet electoral systems that ensure proportional representation, in terms that the candidacies are proposed at the level of the single member constituencies and, consequently, there is a personalized selection. Such a system presumes that a certain percentage of the mandates allocated to a regional constituency should be directly adjudicated at the level of some single member constituencies founded on the territory of that particular regional constituency, whereas the remainder of the mandates should be compensatory and allocated to the parties so that the total number of mandates from which the party eventually benefits - mandates won in single member constituencies plus compensatory mandates - should be proportional to the total number of votes cast to the candidates of the party in all the single member constituencies in the region (the system was used in Italy for the election of the Senate, between 1994 and 2005).

#### **1.3. Mixed voting systems**

The mixed voting systems combine under different forms, the single member constituency voting system and the list voting system. They emerged after the Second World War as an attempt to maximize the advantages of the two classical systems by minimizing the disadvantages. As a rule these systems have proportional representation as far as the allocation of mandates is concerned, which makes certain authors add them to the proportional representation party list

systems.

One of the possibilities is the *geographical mix* of the two types of voting systems. In this case, the single member constituency voting system or the multi-member constituency voting system would apply better in the small-numbered constituencies whereas the list voting system would apply to constituencies having a large number of voters and a large number of mandates. On the other hand, this type of voting system can lead to negative effects by strengthening, for instance, the representation of the particularly rural parties, in which case the single member plurality system would be used.

The other case, which is the most used, refers to the combination of the two voting systems. The resulting systems presume that a part of the mandates is to be allocated in single member constituencies, in which the single member constituency voting system is used, usually in one round, and the remaining mandates are allotted to multi-member constituencies in which a proportional method is used. This classification considers the importance of the two types of voting systems in establishing the final mandates since the mixed systems can be balanced with *proportional dominant* or with *majority dominant*.

The best-known case of a system that joins the two types of voting systems and which, in order to stay proportional in respect of the relation between the number of mandates and the electoral support, also presumes *compensation*, is the German system. On the contrary, the mixed system used in Russia is non-compensated, leading to a disproportional representation. The German system of double-voting, used in Germany from 1946 in order to appoint the members of the Bundestag presumes a voting system in which the voter has two votes: the first is used to appoint half of the 656 deputies, elected by a one-round single member constituency voting system within 328 single member constituencies and the second, for the second half of the mandates, the voter electing a party list. If a party obtains, in single member constituencies, less mandates than would result were the proportionality principle to be followed (exclusively taking into account the results of the proportional voting system), it is granted compensation until the proportion resulted from the elections is reached. These seats are allocated to the candidates on the list used for the second vote, following the order on the list. However, if a party obtains more mandates in the single member constituencies than the proportion to which it is entitled, the further seats are added to the others. This is how it happened in 1990 when the Democrats obtained 6 further seats. This type of system has been used in Republic of Estonia since 1992 and it was adopted in 1993 by referendum in New Zealand in order to replace the traditional single member constituency voting system with one round.

## 2. The influence of the voting systems on the political life

The functioning of a democratic regime does not only depend on the institutions through which the division of work between the executive and the legislative is done, but also on a number of formal rules and moreover, on informal procedures by which the political actors influence the functioning of the regime. In this context, the debate regarding the vote system is closely related to the subject of the consolidation of the democratic processes. And the type of the adopted electoral system may influence both the party system and the political participation.

The key to the success of the reform process of the system of recruiting the political class is the parties' capacity to transform, to reorganize their structure and implicitly to better and responsibly understand the dominant they have. The functionality of a party system depends on how the electoral constraints create a certain political space, both for the organization of the competitive system and also for the strategic perspective.

Maurice Duverger considered three categories of parties according to their dimension resulted from the elections: parties with a proclivity to majority, large parties and small parties. The majority parties have absolute majority in Parliament or are likely to accomplish it in a normal institutional behaviour. The existence of such parties is normal in the pure, two-party systems and completely exceptional in multi-party systems.

After the degree to which they influence the dynamics of the party systems and the electoral behaviour, the electoral systems can be sorted in two areas. In accordance with Giovanni Sartori, the electoral systems may, on one hand, exercise their influence on the electors and on the other hand, on the party systems. A defining element of the effect the electoral system has on the electors is the presence or the absence of the constraining character. Thus, there are 'weak' systems and 'strong' systems. According to this classification, the majority systems, since they determine the electors' behaviour, are 'strong' electoral systems and the proportional systems are rather 'weak' systems.

Then again, certain factors may affect the proportionality of the proportional systems: the small dimensions of the constituency or the method of transforming the votes into mandates. In accordance with the way the electoral system determines the evolution of the party systems, governmental teams are taking shape. The majority electoral systems contribute to the structuring of the two-party system with strong parties, those that Duverger named systems with a proclivity to majority able to obtain alternatively the absolute majority of the votes. On the contrary, the proportional representation electoral systems create extreme multi-party systems and limited multi-party systems, the thin line between them being represented by the systems that have three to five parties and those which have more than five. And the multi-party

systems lead to the creation of coalition governments.

All the electoral systems in force, not only the majority ones, tend to overrepresent the larger parties and underrepresent the smaller ones. On the other hand, an important characteristic of the party system is the maximizing of the seat proportion held by the majority parties in parliament and, consequently, by the artificial emergence of some majority in favor of some parties that did not win most of the votes. This is, usually the effect of the two-party systems which determine the emergence of majority offices in the parliamentary systems or contributes to the appearance of a majority party that supports or opposes the president, when it comes to the presidential or semi presidential systems.

Considered to be a technique of political representation, the electoral system is an important factor in the political reform, influencing the method of recruiting the political life and, thus, the party system, and implicitly, the governmental stability and efficiency. As a first step in a laborious process, the reform of political recruitment cannot be only reduced to the modification of the electoral system, still neither to its neglecting. Italy is an example, since, at the beginning of the decade, it was confronted to a crisis that had certain similarities with the current situation in Romania. In the process of transformation of the political life, the Italian society imposed, as a first reform, the modification of the electoral system. The setting up of the second Republic in Italy was the consequence of a social demand of edification of the political life that was affected by governmental instability, political favoritism and corruption scandals. After 1994, the Italian legislative elections, held based on a mixed, majority system with one round for 75% of the seats in each chamber and proportional for the other 25%, illustrated, on one hand, the mobility of the party system in front of the constraints to which they are subject in the transitional process from the integral proportional system to the mixed system with relative majority, and on the hand, the relativity of the electoral reform since the other reforms were not been completed. A decade later since its implementation, the mixed system had already consequences: the average life expectancy for the governments had moved from 1,3 years up to 1993 to 2,6 (and between 1996 and 2006 even 3,3). Alternation in governing which was unknown in this country until 1994 opened a new stage in the democracy process of the Italian society and in the reform of the political and representation system. But the transformation of the Italian electoral system at the end of 2005 and the return to proportional representation proves once again that, without a permanent civic control, the parties' drift may influence the rules of the democratic game.

Far from being just a mere technique, the electoral system interrelates and is related to the existent political culture or cultures. The multi-party system specific to the continental Europe is not the direct reflecting of the electoral systems, yet it unveils historic traditions, social particularities and cultural aspects that together contribute to the creation of a party system.

# Voting systems used in the election of national/federal parliaments

At a brief analysis of the electoral systems used in the legislative elections in the countries that are the object of this paper, it is simple to observe that proportional representation is the main characteristic with regard to the European electoral processes. Among all these countries, only two- France and Great Britain- use majority systems and two others Lithuania and Hungary have mixed systems<sup>1</sup>.

However, on the other hand, it is worth noticing that, in most countries, the electoral laws bear the stamp of the legislator's concerns to ensure real possibilities to the electors in order to be able to intervene in the selection of candidates who end up being elected. On this aspect, one observation is that there are presently only three countries in the European Union - Italy, Spain and Portugal - where the list of candidates proposed by a political party or an alliance between parties in a constituency or another is called, according to the theory of electoral systems, 'the blocked list'. In other words, only in those three countries the elector does not have any possibility to intervene in the list he votes to increase the chances of some candidates and decrease the others' chances. In other countries, there are different mechanisms that make this intervention possible.

There are a relatively large number of countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Latvia, Netherlands, Slovakia, and Sweden) where the elector has 'a closed list' to vote. This list has a composition and an order pre-determined by the party which proposes, the elector having the possibility to modify that particular order by the preferential votes he may cast for his favorite candidates or even by casting 'negative votes' to the candidates he wishes to exclude

form the electoral competition (Latvia). A higher level of the elector's intervention in the selection of candidates can be encountered in countries such as Estonia, Finland, Greece and Poland, where the list of candidates is open (without an order pre-established by the party) and the preferential vote is mandatory. In these countries, the electors basically establish the order of candidates on the list, since every elector is made to choose a certain candidate in order for his vote to be valid (even though the vote for that particular candidate automatically means a vote cast to the list to which the candidate belongs). A special case is Luxembourg, where each elector has a number of votes equal to the number of mandates allocated to the constituency where he votes, and which he may cast to the same number of candidates who can appear on different lists. Also, the system of Slovenia, where the electors establish the order of candidates on the list proposed by the party at the regional level since every elector has one candidate to vote of those who represent the that particular list in his district, is an interesting one and it can be considered a *proportional representation party list system with a single member constituency voting*.

Finally, the single transferable vote system used in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Malta is, also, a proportional representation system in which the electors' involvement in the selection of those who go to the Parliament is an effective one.

The table on the next page illustrates a classification of the electoral systems in all the 27 analyzed countries, according to the type of representation that each system determines and to the voting system.

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<sup>1</sup> Although many consider the German system as being a mixed one (due to the two votes each elector has- one for a candidate in the single member constituency and the other for a list at the land level), this system does not belong to 'the proportional representation by compensation, with a personalized selection' category.

Country	The type of the electoral system according to the representation type (for countries with bicameral parliaments, the lower chamber is taken into consideration)									
	Majority		Proportional							Mixed
	a) with one round	b) with two rounds	a) with a blocked list	closed and with optional preferential vote(s)	b) with an unblocked list		c) with single transferable vote	d) through compensation, with personalized selection		
Austria				•						
Belgium				•						
Czech Republic				•						
Cyprus				•						
Danemarca				•						
Estonia					•					
Finland					•					
France		•								
Germany									•	
Greece					•					
Ireland									•	
Italy			•							
Latvia				•						
Lithuania										•
Luxembourg							•			
Malta								•		
Netherlands				•						
Poland					•					
Portugal			•							
United Kingdom	•									
Slovakia				•						
Slovenia					• <sup>2</sup>					
Spain			•							
Sweden				•						
Hungary										•
Bulgaria			•							
Romania			•							

2 Slovenia represents a special case, since the preferential vote is mandatory because, within the district in which he votes, the elector may choose the list of candidates the party proposes at the regional level, only by voting the candidate 'distributed' in his district.



# Austria

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The Austrian Parliament has two chambers: the National Council (Nationalrat) which has 183 members elected for four years and the Federal Council (Bundesrat) which has 64 members elected for five or six years by the regional parliaments.

## The type of the electoral system used

The National Council is elected by party-list proportional representation with a closed voting list and preferential vote which may be optional. The political parties may put forward lists of candidates on the level of the 9 provinces (Länder), on the level of the 43 regional districts in which the 9 provinces are divided, as well as on federal level.

In the Federal Council, the seats are divided among the parties, in accordance with the number of seats that they have in the regional assemblies.

## The electoral threshold

There is an electoral threshold of 4% allotted for the access of the political parties to the second and the third phase in the process of allocation of mandates, namely those carried out at the level of the 9 provinces and at the federal level.

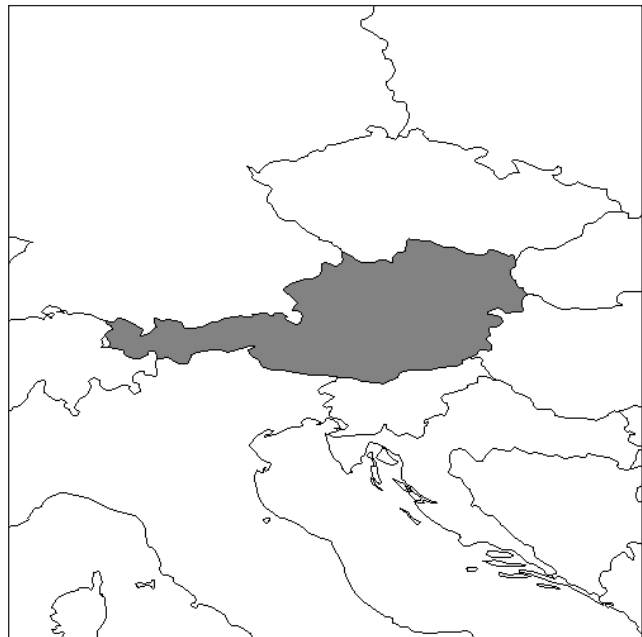
## How the elector votes

The voter can vote one list of candidates on which he may also express a preference for one of the candidates.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The counting of the votes is, firstly, done at the level of regional districts, where the number of votes necessary to win a term is equal to the number of votes cast in the district divided to the number of mandates allotted to that district. The number of mandates that are allotted to each political party in a district is agreed on by the Hagenbach-Bischoff method (for each party, the number of votes is divided to the number of mandates that are allotted to the district, plus one).

The votes that are not taken into consideration at the district level (the remainder of the dividing operations) are cumulated, for each party, at the level of provinces, but only for those parties which have a threshold higher than 4% of the total number of votes at the level of provinces. The allocation system of mandates used at this level is similar to the one on the local level. The



votes that were not used at the level of provinces are cumulated on federal level, but only for those parties that have more than 4% of the total number of votes cast on federal level. At this level, the d'Hondt formula is used for the allocation of mandates.

Once the number of mandates corresponding to each party has been settled, these mandates are going to be taken advantage of, first of all, by the candidates who bring together a number of preferential votes equal to at least half of the electoral quota of the constituency (the number of votes corresponding to a term, obtained by dividing the total number of votes validly cast in the constituency to the number of mandates corresponding to that constituency) or at least equal to 1/6 of the valid votes allotted to their party in that particular constituency. The number of preferential votes obtained by each candidate determines in which order the mandates are allocated. In case one or more candidates are entitled to get the last term that is allotted in the constituency, the position of the candidate on the list of the party is decisive.

The mandates allotted to a party that cannot be cast to the candidates based on the preferential votes (there are less candidates who meet the above-mentioned requirements than the number of mandates that are to be allocated) will be allotted to the candidates in the descending order of the position they fill on the party's list.



# Belgium

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament is bicameral, having two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

## The type of the electoral system used

For the election of the House of Representatives, it is used a proportional representation party list system and an optional preferential organized on the level of several member constituencies.

As for the Senate, 40 of its members are elected directly, in multi-member constituencies founded on linguistic criteria (25 by the Flemish electoral college and 15 by the French electoral college) using the proportional representation party list system. 21 senators are appointed by the communities' assemblies- 10 by and within the Flemish Community Parliament, 10 appointed by de French Community Parliament and 1 by and within the Germanspeaking Community Parliament. 10 more are co-opted based on the power of the parties represented in the Senate: 6 by the senators elected directly and 4 by the 21 senators appointed by the communities. The direct descendants of the monarch are, also, senators but they are not counted when the quorum of this Chamber is established.

## The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

## How the elector votes

First of all, it must be mentioned that the vote is compulsory and the unmotivated absence is penalized not only by a simple fine but also by excluding the voter from the electoral register.

On entering the constituency, the voter is given several ballot papers, one for each party running for the election. He must choose a ballot paper and introduce it in an envelop which, he must then put into the ballot box, thus being able to write on the ballot paper the name of the preferred candidate (from the list of candidates proposed by the party to whom the ballot paper belongs).

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

At this phase, the number of mandates allocated to each list is established in the House of Representatives, by using the d'Hondt formula (the number of votes for each list is divided to a number of



whole, consecutive divisors 1, 2, 3..., equal to the number of allocated mandates, then, once the quotients of this operation performed on each list, are sorted in descending order, a term corresponds to each result until all mandates are allocated). Afterwards, the names of the candidates on the list who are going to be allocated the mandates are settled as follows:

- the 'eligibility number' is calculated for each list that received mandates, by dividing the number of votes obtained on the list to the number of allocated seats plus one;
- each candidate in favor of whom preferential votes were cast in equal number to the eligibility number, is declared to be elected;
- when a candidate no longer meet this requirement, the votes cast nominally for the candidate and the half of the remaining votes after the allocation of seats are being taken into consideration. The first candidate, in accordance with the order of votes, is the one who can benefit from the remainder of the votes in order to reach the eligibility number. If this number has been reached, the remainders of the votes are transferred to the second candidate and so on.

# Czech Republic

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament of the Czech Republic is a bicameral one. The Senate has 81 members, for six-year terms. Once every two years, elections are being held for one third of the seats in the Senate. The Chamber of Deputies has 200 members elected for 4-year terms.

## The type of the electoral system used

The senators are elected by absolute majority system (in order to be elected, a candidate must receive more than half of the valid, cast votes) within single member constituencies.

The deputies are elected by proportional representation closed party list system carried out at the level of electoral constituencies that correspond to the administrative regions of the Czech Republic; each voter also has the possibility to cast preferential votes in favor of no more than four candidates from the list they vote.

## The electoral threshold

For a political party, the electoral threshold is of 5% of the valid, cast votes. For the coalitions, another 2% is added to the initial 5% for each party, beginning with the second until the threshold reaches 11% (and it is, thus, kept no matter how many parties, beyond 4, form the coalition).

In case the electoral threshold is not exceeded by at least two parties or by a party and a coalition or by two coalitions, the electoral threshold corresponding to each category is reduced by one percent until this condition is met.

## How the elector votes

Each voter receives a set of ballot papers and an envelope, each ballot paper containing the list of candidates of a political party or of a coalition. Before introducing in the envelope the ballot paper corresponding to the party whose list the candidate wishes to vote, he can express his preference for a number of four candidates at most, by writing on the ballot paper, the order number of the candidates in the required spaces.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

As for the Senate elections, the candidate who receives at least half of the valid, cast votes plus one is appointed the winner in each single member constituency. If none of the candidates meets this requirement, a second round is organized allowing the candidates ranked on the first two positions of the first round, to take part.



Regarding the Chamber of Deputies:

- a) the electoral quota 'q' is established by dividing the total number of votes validly cast at the national level, to the number of mandates (200). The result of the division is approximated to the next whole number,
- b) the number of mandates allocated for each region is established, in accordance with the vote participation (the number of mandates per region = the number of votes validly cast in the region/q). The remainders are distributed in compliance with the largest remainder method,
- c) the number of mandates allocated to each list of candidates as it follows:
  - in each region, the electoral quota of the region is calculated by dividing the total number of valid, votes cast in the region, to the number of mandates allocated to the region plus one;
  - the number of mandates allocated to each list is established by dividing the number of votes validly cast in favor of that list to the electoral quota of the region; thus to the whole quotient corresponds a number of mandates equal to the quotient. The unallocated mandates are distributed according to the largest remainder method;
- d) For each list, the mandates are allocated to the candidates, first of all based on the number of preferential votes cast to each, but only in case the candidates whose number of preferential votes is equal to at least 10% of the votes validly cast for the list, and then, based on their position on the list.

# Cyprus

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament of the Republic of Cyprus is unicameral and, beginning with 1985, has 80 members: 56 (70%) of them are elected by the Greek-Cypriot community and 24 (30%) belong to the Cypriot-Turkish community.

## The type of the electoral system used

The elections are carried out based on a close party list proportional representation and preferential vote, organized at the level of six electoral constituencies.

## The electoral threshold

In order to take part in the allocation of mandates in the first phase (at the level of the six constituencies), in a constituency, a party or an candidate must reach a threshold equal to the result of the division of the number of votes validly cast in that particular constituency to the number of mandates allocated to the constituency.

In the second phase, in which the mandates that were not allocated in the first phase are allocated, at national level, a political party can only be included if the votes that it obtained represent at least 1,8% of the votes cast at national level. For the coalitions, the threshold in this phase is 10%, whereas the independent candidates do not have access to this phase.

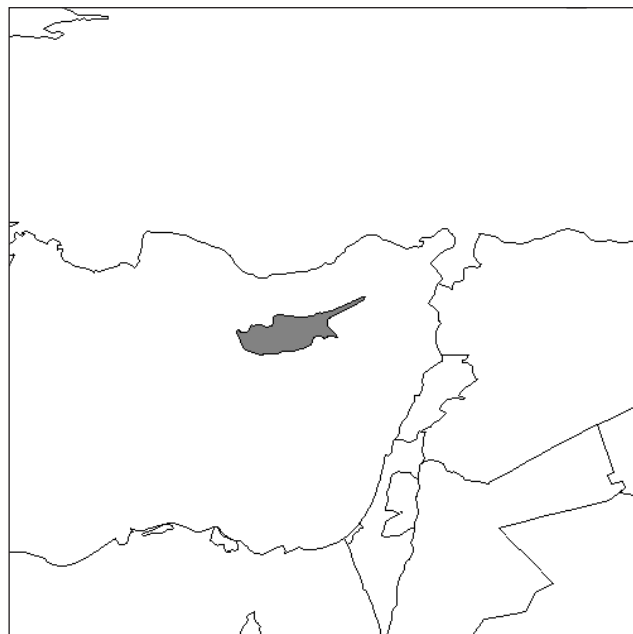
## How the elector votes

The elector must vote a list of candidates, among of those that are proposed for his constituency, having the possibility that, within that particular list, to express the preference for one of the candidates.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of the mandates is carried out in two phases.

In **the first phase**, the number of votes validly cast is divided, in each electoral constituency, to the number of mandates in the constituency. The result represents 'the electoral quota' for that particular constituency. The number of votes validly cast for each list is divided to this quota, and the result is a prime number of



mandates received by each list (representing the whole part of the quotient).

In **the second phase**, the remainders resulted from the divisions of the first phase (the votes not used in the first phase) are cumulated at national level, for each party/coalition (that overcame the threshold to take part in this phase). Thus the obtained number for each party/coalition is divided with the result of the division of the total number of votes cumulated at national level (representing the remainders resulted after the first phase) to the number of mandates left to allocate. This results in the number of mandates that are allocated, at this level, to each party or coalition. If there are still mandates to allocate, these are allotted to the parties/coalitions, in the descending order of the remainders corresponding to these. The allocated mandates in the second phase are distributed to those lists of the parties/coalitions in the constituencies in which the parties or the coalitions have obtained the largest number of votes.

Once the number of mandates corresponding to each list is established, these are allocated to those candidates in whose favor the largest number of preferential votes was cast. In case there are several candidates on the same list with the same number of preferential votes, the position that each of them holds on that particular list, is taken into consideration.

## Denmark

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Danish Parliament, Folktinget, consists of 179 members elected for 4-year terms. Two of the 179 mandates are allocated to Faroe Islands and another two to Greenland.

### The type of the electoral system used

The Danish electoral system is a complex one based on the principle of proportional representation combined with that of regional allocation of mandates according to the population, the number of electors and the geographical area.

As far as the elections are concerned, Denmark is divided in three regions: The Metropolitan Copenhagen, the Islands and Jutland. In their turn, these are divided into 17 electoral constituencies. The 17 constituencies are parted in 103 'nominal' districts, which are not relevant as far as the allocation of mandates among the electoral competitors is concerned, but they hold an important role in the process of allocation of mandates among the candidates of the same party, as well as from the point of view of the election management. Each political party has the possibility, not the obligation, to allot each candidate, within each of the 17 constituencies, a certain 'nominal' district, in which the candidate appears the first on his party's ballot papers.

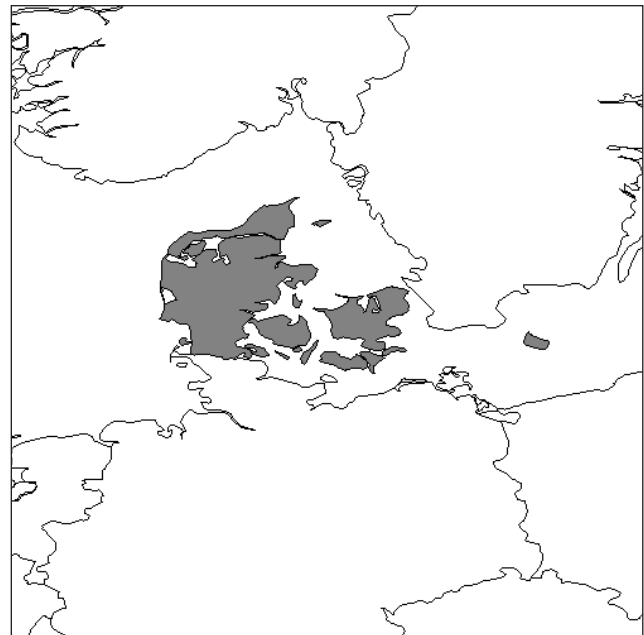
### The electoral threshold

In order to take part in the process of mandate allocation at national level, a political party has to meet one of the three requirements:

- receives a mandate, directly, in one of the 17 electoral constituencies;
- obtains, in at least two of the three regions, a number of votes equal to the electoral quota of the region (the number of votes validly cast divided to the number of mandates corresponding to the region);
- obtains at least 2% of the votes validly cast at national level.

### How the elector votes

At the level of the (multi-member) 17 constituencies, the system allows the elector to vote for a candidate or for a party list by simply ticking his preference.



### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

Out of the remaining 175 mandates (after the subtraction of four of the 179 for the Faeroe Islands and Greenland), 135 are allocated at the level of the 17 constituencies, whereas 40 are compensatory mandates allocated at national level.

The allocation of mandates to the political parties takes place in several phases, as it follows:

- 1) in the first phase, the mandates corresponding to the constituency are distributed, in each of the 17 electoral constituencies, among the political parties, in accordance with the number of votes received by each party at the constituency level, by using a modified Saint-Langue Method (the number of votes obtained by each party is divided, in turn to a number of divisors - 1; 4; 3; 5; 7... equal to the number of mandates that are to be allocated, then the resulting quotients for each party are ordered in descending order, and, in the same order, a mandate is allotted to each quotient).
- 2) the second phase assumes the decision regarding the parties which take part in the allocation of compensatory mandates, more precisely, of those parties that attain at least one of the three above mentioned electoral thresholds;
- 3) in the third phase, the 40 compensatory mandates are allotted as it follows:
  - the national electoral quota is established by dividing the number of votes validly cast at national level to 175;

- the total number of mandates that should be allocated to each party, out of the 175 , is established by dividing the number of votes received by the party at national level, to the national electoral quota;
- the number of mandates already received at the level of the 17 electoral constituencies is subtracted from this number, which results into the number of mandates, out of the total number of 40 mandates that are allocated to each political party.

4) the next phase is represented by the allocation of the 40 compensatory mandates to the three regions and the 17 constituencies, and implicitly to the party's lists of candidates at the level of the 17 regions.

Concomitantly with this phase, it is established the number of mandates allocated to each list of candidates put forward by the political parties at the

level of the 17 regions.

From this moment on, the next step is to allocate the mandates among the candidates of the same list. In order to do so, an 'electoral score' is calculated for each candidate, representing the result of the addition between the number of preferential votes received in all the single member districts and the number of votes allocated to the candidate, out of the those received by the party, at the district level. For the parties which choose to allocate the candidates on the lists in single member districts, this number is equal to the number of votes received on the party's list in the single member district in which the candidate is on the top of the list. For the remainder of the parties, this number is calculated according to the position the candidate holds on the list (in this second case, the parties choose to limit the electors' influence on the selection of the candidates).

## Estonia

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament, named 'Riigikogu', is a unicameral one and has 101 members, elected on a four-year term.

### The type of the electoral system used

The members of the parliament are elected by an open list voting system and mandatory preferential vote, which takes place at the level of 11 multi-member constituencies.

### The electoral threshold

In the second phase of the mandate allocation, in which then 'compensatory' mandates are allotted nation-wide, only the parties that exceed the 5% threshold of the votes validly cast at national level take part in.

### How the elector votes

The elector fills in by hand, the ballot paper with the order number corresponding to the preferred candidate on the national list. The ballot papers are considered to be invalid provided that there is not the order number of any candidate, the numbers of several candidates are placed on them, the number of a candidate who does not runs for that particular constituency is written down or they are incorrect or illegible.



### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The electoral quota is calculated for each constituency by dividing the number of votes validly cast to the number of mandates allocated to the constituency. Each candidate who received a higher number of votes or a number of votes equal to the electoral quota is elected.

In the second phase of the mandate allocation:

- 1) a nation-wide list of candidates is established for each political party, on which the candidates are



placed in descending order to the votes received by each;

- 2) the votes received on all the 11 lists (from the 11 constituencies), are totaled for each party among those which exceed the 5% threshold of the votes validly cast. Based on the results of these additions, the number of 'compensatory' mandates, allocated in the second phase and corresponding to each party, is established. In order to do so, a modified d'Hondt algorithm is used; the number of votes corresponding to each national list is divided to 1; 20,9; 30,9 etc and a mandate is allocated to each quotient obtained, in descending order, yet

overlooking, for each list, a number of quotients equal to the number of mandates already received by the candidates on that particular list, in constituencies, since they received a numbers of votes at least equal to the electoral quota;

- 3) once the number of compensatory mandates allocated to each party/coalition is established, these are allotted to the candidates following the order in which they appear on the national lists (in accordance with the number of votes received by each), leaving aside the candidates who already received mandates at the level of constituencies.

## Finland

### Tipul si structura Parlamentului

The Parliament of the Republic of Finland (Eduskunta-Riksdagen) is unicameral and formed of 200 members elected on a 4-year term.

### The type of the electoral system used

199 of the representatives of the Parliament are elected by a proportional representation party list system and by mandatory preferential vote, and the ballot is organized at the level of the 15 electoral constituencies that correspond to the country's administrative regions. In one of the constituencies (the Åland Islands) only one candidate is elected, that who receives the largest number of votes.

### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

The elector ticks the name of the preferred candidate on the ballot paper (whose number he may find by consulting the list of candidates that are compulsorily posted in each constituency).

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The votes received for each candidate are counted in order to allocate the mandates. A vote cast to a candidate proposed by a political party or an alliance of parties is considered to be a vote cast for the entire list of candidates put forward by that party or alliance. After the candidates of the same list are placed in



descending order to the votes received by each, a '*comparative index*' is calculated for each candidate as it follows: the index of the candidate placed first on the list is equal to the total number of votes received by the list, the index of the runner-up is equal to half of the votes received on the list, whereas the that of the third candidate is equal to a third of the votes on the list, etc. Once the '*comparative indices*' were calculated for all the candidates in the constituency, on all the lists, these are placed in descending order to the value of the indices, each of them receiving a mandate until all the mandates are allocated. In those situations when the '*comparative index*' of several candidates is the same, the order of the candidates is decided by drawing lots for them.



# France

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The French Parliament is a bicameral one: The National Assembly (the lower chamber) and the Senate (the upper chamber). The Senate represents the department representatives of the Republic, as well as the French citizens living abroad.

## The type of the electoral system used

The deputies of the National Assembly are elected by a single member majority system with two rounds and the elections are held in 577 single member electoral constituencies.

In its originality, the Senate elects its members by single member majority system in the small departments (in which a maximum of 3 senators is elected) and by proportional representation system in the other departments. The 331 senators are elected on a 6-year renewable term. Every 3 years elections are held for  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the number of senators.

The senators are elected by an electoral college formed of over 145.000 people: deputies, regional or general counselors, delegates of the local councils, members of the Superior Council of the French citizens living abroad.

In the departments in which a maximum of three senators is elected, the elections take place by a single member voting system with two rounds. In order to be elected in the first round, the candidate must have obtained the absolute majority of the votes validly cast and in equal number to at least a quarter of the enlisted electors. In the second round, a relative majority is sufficient and the eldest candidate wins in case of perfect equality.

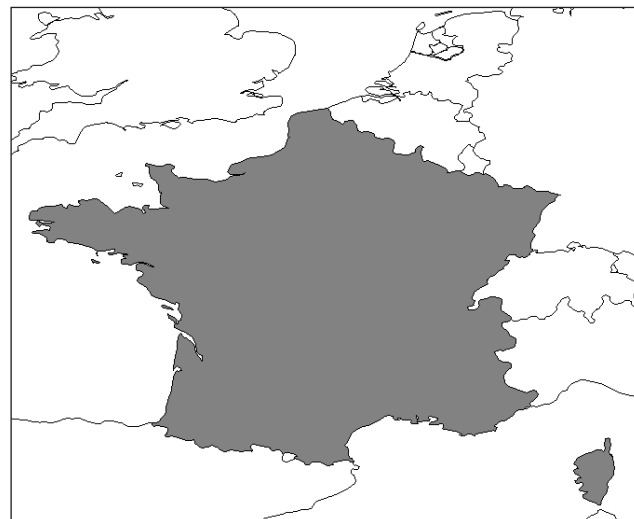
In the departments in which at least 5 senators are elected, the elections take place in one round, by close list proportional representation system. The same system is used also for the 12 senators representing the French citizens living abroad.

## The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold for the parties.

## How the elector votes

Each elector receives more ballot papers, each containing either the name of a candidate (such it is the case of the national Assembly and the senators elected in the small departments) or a list of candidates (the case of the senators elected in the large departments).



He must place one of the ballot papers in an envelope stamped with the constituency's name and then put the envelope into the ballot box.

The 'white' vote ( that of the elector who introduces an empty envelope, without a ballot paper in it, in the ballot box) is taken into consideration whereas the single member constituency is concerned, when it must be established whether a candidate meets the requirement regarding the number of those who came to vote.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

As far as the National Assembly is concerned, a candidate must receive 50% of the votes validly cast in the constituency and more than 25% of the votes of those enlisted in that particular constituency, in order to be elected in the first round. In the constituencies in which none of the candidates meets these two requirements, a second round is organized to which those candidates who received 12, 5% of the votes validly cast in the first round have the right to participate and the candidate who receives the largest number of votes is the winner.

As for the Senate elections,

- the same rule as that used in the elections for the National Assembly, is applied in the small departments;
- the number of mandates that are allocated on each list is established by using the largest remainder method, in the large department.

## Germany

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany is bicameral, with the Lower Chamber (Bundestag), which theoretically<sup>3</sup> has 598 members, and the Upper Chamber (Bundesrat) with 69 members.

### The type of the electoral system used

For the **Bundestag**, the elections are held based on a proportional representation voting system by compensation, with a personalized selection. A number of 299 members are elected in 299 single member constituencies, where each is declared to be the winner if he receives the largest number of votes. The other seats go to the candidates on the lists of the political parties that proposed them at the land level. The candidates who run for the elections in a single member constituency can also appear on the party's list at the land level.

The members of the **Bundesrat** are appointed by the legislative assemblies of the 16 lands.

### The electoral threshold

A political party may can to be represented in the **Bundestag** if the votes received on its lists of candidates, totalized at the federal level, represent at least 5% of the total number of votes or if it manages to receive three mandates in single member constituencies.

### How the elector votes

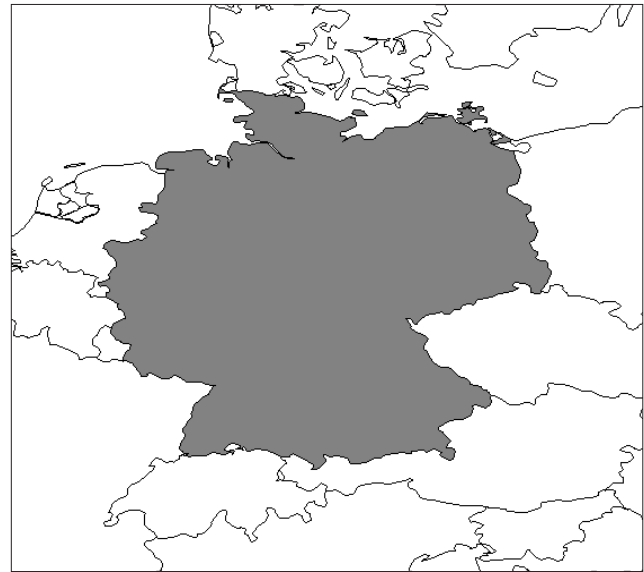
The elector votes only for the Bundestag and has two votes to give: one to the candidates in the single member constituency in which he votes and the other on the lists of candidates proposed by the parties at the land level.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

First of all, in each of the 299 single member constituencies, the winning candidate is the one who receives the largest number of votes, which does not have to represent the absolute majority (50%) of the votes validly cast.

In the second phase, the following steps are taken:

- out of the 598 mandates, the number corresponding to each list of candidates of the



ones proposed by the parties at the land level is established. In order to do so, the percentage representing the number of votes on each list is established out of the total number of votes validly cast at federal level, and then this percentage is multiplied to the number of allocated mandates (598, if there is no single member constituency in which the elections were won by an independent candidate or by a candidate belonging to a party that did not put forward a list in the land where is that particular constituency) and a number of mandates equal to the whole part of the operation's result is allocated to the list. The remainders of these operations completed for all the lists, determines the way in which the remaining mandates are allocated: the remainders decide, in a descending order, the lists to which the mandates are allocated (according to the corresponding lists);

- the number of mandates won by each party to which the list in the single member constituencies of that land corresponds, is subtracted from the number of mandates meant to be allocated to that list, which leads to the number of candidates on the list who accede in the Bundestag;
- once the number of mandates allocated on each list at each land's level, has been established, the candidates who form the list, benefit from mandates in the descending order of the position they have on the list, until all the mandates are distributed. If one of the candidates on the list, who was going to be allocated a mandate in this phase, ran for the elections in one of the single member

<sup>3</sup> The number of members in the Bundestag may vary from one legislature to the other, according to how the compensation at the federal level determines the number of mandates allocated to each list of candidates at the land level (see point 5).

constituencies and won the mandate of that constituency, he is ignored and the mandate is allocated to the candidate on the next position.

This manner of allocating the mandates that keeps record of the results in the vote cast in the single member constituencies and those of the round carried out in the lands, actually determines the proportional character of this system since it establishes a proportional relation between the number of seats in the Bundestag allocated to each political party and the electoral support that particular party receives, cast in

the number of votes obtained on the party' lists and totaled at federal level.

In case a political party receives a higher number of mandates than those it was entitled to, as a result of the operations above-mentioned, in the electoral constituencies of a land, those mandates are added to the total number of seats in the Bundestag, which makes their number variable from one legislature to another.

## Greece

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament of the Greek Republic (Vouli ton Ellion) is unicameral, having 300 members, elected every four years.

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are held based on open list proportional representation system and mandatory<sup>4</sup> preferential votes and it is organized at the level of 56 electoral constituencies (among which five are being allocated one mandate only).

### The electoral threshold

The electoral threshold to accede to the Parliament is of 3% of the votes validly cast at national level and it is applicable for both political parties and candidates.

### How the elector votes

The elector must choose among the candidates of the same preferred list a number of candidates to whom he casts his votes. The number of these votes differs from one constituency to the other according to the size of the constituency (for instance in Athens, where 40 deputies are elected, the elector has six votes, whereas in Heraklion, where 8 deputies are elected, the voter may cast two votes).

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

There are three stages to be taken in establishing the number of mandates allocated to each political party.



In **the first stage**, the number of votes validly cast in each electoral constituency is divided to the number of mandates in the constituency plus one. The result of this operation represents the number by which the number of votes validly cast on each list, is divided, and the outcome is thus a prime number of mandates received by each list (representing the whole part of the quotient).

In **the second stage**, 13 electoral constituencies are taken into consideration at the level of the entire territory. The total number of votes validly cast in each of the 13th constituencies is divided to the number of mandates left to allocate in that particular constituency after the distribution of mandates in the first stage. The result represents the number by which the number of votes validly cast on each list is divided, which results into a second number of mandates received by each list (representing the whole part of the quotient). If there

<sup>4</sup> Starting with 2005, as far as the anticipated elections (held before the end of the four-year term) are concerned, they are carried out based on the closed list voting system, without using the preferential vote.

are still a number of mandates to be allocated, the third stage is taken.

In the **third stage**, the number of votes validly cast for each political party or independent candidate nationwide is divided to the number of mandates that are to be allocated. The result represents the number by which the number of votes validly cast on each list is divided,

which results into a third number of mandates received by each party. If, at the end of this operation, there are still mandates to be allocated, these are allotted to the party that obtained the largest number of votes at national level. The allocated mandates at this level are directed to the lists of the different electoral constituencies, in accordance with the number votes received by each party in those constituencies.

## Ireland

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Irish parliament is a bicameral one, formed of the Chamber of representatives (Dáil Éirean) which has 166 members and the Senate (Seanad Éirean) that has 60 members.

### The type of the electoral system used

Starting with 1922, the single transferable vote system is used for the election of the Chamber of Representatives and the elections are held in 42 electoral constituencies; the number of mandates corresponding to each constituency varies, according to the law, between 3 and 8 (in accordance with number of inhabitants in each constituency). In fact, the number of representatives who are elected in a constituency is not bigger than 5.

The members of the Senate are appointed, in a maximum of 90 days after the election of the Chamber of Representatives, as it follows:

- 11 of them are appointed by the Prime Minister (Taoiseach);
- 6 are elected by the graduates of two universities The National University of Ireland and the University of Dublin, of the representatives of these two universities (3 of each), using the single transferable vote system;
- 43 are elected among those people having the experience and the expertise in one of the 5 fields of activity: culture and education, agriculture and fishing, work, industry and commerce (including architecture) and administration and social services (including volunteering activities). The election is done (by mail) by an electoral body formed of the members of the Chamber of Representatives, the members of the Senate in function, the members of the district councils, using the single transferable vote system. The appointment of the candidates for the 5 fields of activity are made by the members of the two



chambers (any 4 members may propose a candidate but each member can only support a candidate).

### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

Both in the case of the elections of the Chamber of Representatives and that of the case of elections of the 6 senators appointed by the two universities and the 43 selected by the specialists in the 5 fields above-mentioned, elections for which the single transferable vote system is used, the voter receives a ballot paper on which all the candidates in the constituency are mentioned, plus sometimes the name of the party they represent, in alphabetical order or in the order established by drawing lots for it (and not grouped according to the parties they represent). The elector has a vote which he can transfer from a candidate to another, marking the names of different candidates with 1, for the first preference, 2 for the second candidate etc. The elector's rationing is the following: *'The candidate to whom I would cast my vote is X and I mark his name with 1. If he gets too many votes and*

*does not need my vote, or he gets fewer and is excluded from the competition, I wish my vote to be transferred to candidate Y and I mark his name with 2. But if Y also receives too many votes so he does not need my vote, or to few, I wish my vote to be transferred to candidate Z and I mark his name with 3, etc'.* It is worth mentioning that the elector may decide that the transfer of his vote is done among the candidates representing several political parties.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

First of all, an electoral quota that a candidate must exceed in order to be elected, is established for each electoral constituency. Unlike other countries in which the single transferable voting system is used, the 'droop quota' is used in Ireland, which is calculated after the following formula:

$$q = \frac{\text{No. of valid votes}}{\text{No. of mandates} + 1} + 1$$

Only the preferences marked with 1 on each ballot paper are taken into consideration at the first counting and the result must show of how many '1's each candidate benefited from. Once this thing has been established, it can be settled whether there is a candidate who reaches or exceeds the electoral quota. If there is, that candidate is declared to be the winner, and the number of votes that exceed the quota is transferred to the other candidates, in accordance with the percentage the preferences marked with '2' represent, in favor of those on all the ballot papers of the winning candidate. If there is not such a candidate who may have touched or exceeded the quota, the candidate situated on the last position at the first counting is excluded from the competition and his votes are transferred to the other candidate after the above-mentioned criteria. The second counting follows taking into consideration the preferences marked by '2' and the preferences marked by '1', transferred to the elected candidate or the one excluded after the first counting. And at the end of this counting the same procedure is used as after the first one. The procedure continues until all the mandates are allocated.

## Italy

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Italian Parliament is bicameral with the Senate (315 elected senators and senators for life) and the Chamber of Deputies (630 deputies). The term is of 5 years for both Chambers.

### The type of the electoral system used

Starting with December 2005, it is used the proportional representation party system with a blocked<sup>5</sup> list. At the same time, the Italian electoral system stipulates the granting of an electoral bonus for the party/coalition which ranks on the first position.

For the Chamber of Deputies, 12 mandates are allocated in a constituency representing the citizens living abroad and 1 mandate is allotted to the region of Valle d'Aosta. The remaining 617 mandates are allocated to the 26 electoral constituencies set up at the regional level, each of them having a number of mandates proportional to its size.

As for the Senate, a mandate is allotted to Valle d'Aosta, 7 to Trento Alto Adige and 6 to the constituency representing the citizens living abroad.



The rest of 301 mandates are allocated to constituencies set up at the level of the 18 left regions, each region receiving a number of mandates proportional to its population.

### The electoral threshold

For the Chamber of Deputies, the thresholds are calculated at national level, as it follows:

- 10% for coalitions
- 4% for parties that do not belong to coalitions
- 2% for parties that belong to coalitions (this does not apply to the lists of the national minorities within the coalition)

Within the coalitions, the votes of the parties that do

<sup>5</sup> In 1994, the proportional representation party list system with personalized selection had been adopted by referendum (based on which 75% of the mandates were won directly, within some single member constituencies, and the other 25% were compensatory mandates and were allocated at the regional level, to the candidates on the regional lists for the Chamber of Deputies, namely to certain candidates who lost the elections in the single member constituencies, as far as the Senate was concerned).



not reach the 2% threshold are also counted, but only the votes of the first party under the 2% threshold are taken into consideration, in the descending order of the votes.

For the Senate, the thresholds are calculated at the regional level:

- 20% for the coalitions
- 8% for parties not included in coalitions and for the parties in the coalitions that do not reach 20%
- 3% for the parties within coalitions

Even if a party reaches the electoral threshold nationwide, it may not receive any mandate if it does not reach the electoral threshold in either of the regions.

### How the elector votes

The electors get a ballot paper for each Chamber, on which they mark the preferred list, without changing the order of the candidates. The list of each party is printed separately even if the party is part of a coalition.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

For the Chamber of Deputies, the mandates are allocated at national level, taking into consideration the parties that exceeded 4% of the votes validly cast and the coalitions which exceeded 10% of the votes validly cast. The remaining 617 mandates are allocated proportionally among these.

If the winning party/coalition has at least 340 mandates (55% of the 617 available) it is established the number of mandates allotted to each party within the coalition,

since only the parties that exceed the 2% threshold, and only the first party under the 2% threshold, for each coalition, are taken into consideration.

In case the winning party/coalition does not have 340 mandates, it receives the difference between the number of won mandates and 340 under the form of electoral bonus. The remaining 277 mandates are allocated proportionally to the other parties/coalitions that exceeded the electoral threshold. Then, the number of mandates allotted to each party within the coalitions is established, by following the above-mentioned limits.

Once the number of mandates due for each party at national level is established, these are allocated at the level of constituencies and implicitly, at the level of lists, proportional to the votes received by each of these parties.

For the Senate, the mandates are allocated at regional level, taking into consideration the parties that exceeded 8% and the coalitions which exceeded 20% of the votes validly cast.

If in a constituency, the winning party/coalition has 55% of the available mandates in that particular constituency (the number is rounded to a higher figure), the allocated mandates to each coalitions are distributed proportionally among the constitutive parties, though only those which exceeded the 3% threshold.

If the winning party/coalition does not have 55% of the available mandates, it receives the necessary difference under the form of electoral bonus. The remaining available mandates are allocated proportionally to the parties/coalitions that exceeded the threshold, following the above-mentioned limits.

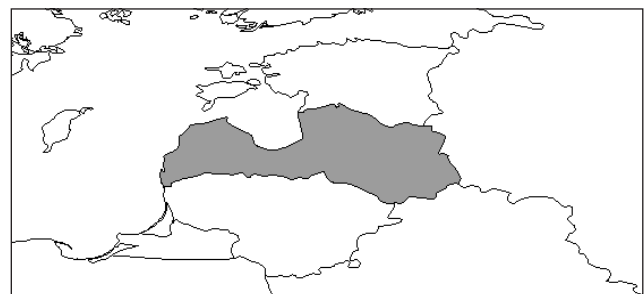
## Latvia

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Latvian Parliament (Saeima) is unicameral. Its 100 members are elected on a 4-year term.

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are held based on a proportional representation party list system and on a preferential vote organized at the level of 5 electoral constituencies. A candidate may appear on the lists put forward by several electoral constituencies.



### The electoral threshold

The electoral threshold is of 5% of the votes validly cast nation-wide.



## How the elector votes

Each elector receives ballot papers on which the lists of candidates proposed by the parties are written separately and also an envelope with the stamp of the constituency; he puts the ballot paper, on which the list he prefers is printed, into the envelope that is then placed into the ballot box. However, prior to this operation, the elector may, optionally, express his preference for one or more candidates of the party whose list he votes, by marking the name of the candidate(s) with '+'. Also, he has the possibility to express his disapproval towards one or more candidates on the voted list, in which case he must cross out from the ballot paper the name or name(s) of the candidate(s).

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

First of all, the number of mandates allocated to each list of candidates is established in each constituency, by applying the Sainte-Lague method: the number of

votes validly cast for each list of candidates is divided to 1, 3, 5...until the divider is at least equal to the number of mandates that are to be allocated, and then the quotients are placed (the results obtained from this operation for each list) in descending order and the mandates are allotted to the list to which each quotient corresponds until all the mandates are distributed.

In the second phase, the following operation is performed for each candidate: a number of votes equal to the number of electors who cut his name from the list is subtracted from the number of votes cast on the candidate's list, and a number of preferential votes the candidate received is added to the result (by marking his name with '+'). The result of this operation determines the order in which the candidates benefit from the mandates. If this result entitles a candidate to receive mandates in two or more constituencies, he will be allocated the mandate in the constituency where the number obtained after this operation is the highest.

# Lithuania

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament (Seima) is unicameral and has 141 members elected every four years.

## The type of the electoral system used

The electoral system is a mixed/direct parallel one: 71 candidates are elected by single member constituency voting system in electoral constituencies and 70 are elected by list voting at national level (the whole territory is considered an electoral constituency).

## The electoral threshold

The parties take part in the process of distributing the mandates that result from the list voting only if they exceed the 5% threshold of the votes cast by the electors (7% for the coalitions). If, once the thresholds have been applied, the number of electors who are to be represented in the Parliament is lower than 60% of those who voted, then the party with the largest number of votes of those under the threshold, wins the right to take part in the allocation of mandates.

## How the elector votes

The elector receives two ballot papers: one for the single member constituency and the other for the



national multi-member constituency. The vote is cast by ticking the name of the candidate (on the ballot paper corresponding to the single member constituency), implicitly the party list (on the ballot paper corresponding to the multi-member constituency); on the list, the elector may (without being mandatory) establish another order for the candidates, having the right to cast preferential votes for a maximum of 5 candidates. If his ticking on the ballot paper does not clearly indicate to whom the preferential votes are cast, the vote is still valid, though the order proposed by the party is taken into consideration.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

In the single member constituencies, a candidate is considered to be elected provided he receives half plus one of the votes cast in that particular constituency. In the case of a competition among more than two candidates in which none of these is declared to be the winner, a second round is organized within two weeks, between the first two positions. In case of a ballotage, the number of votes obtained by each in the first round into consideration; if there is still a case of equality the elder candidate is declared to be the winner. In the constituencies where only two candidates ran for the elections and where none was elected, there is a second round.

At the level of the multi-member constituency, the elections are considered to be valid if a quarter of the total number of electors takes part in. The mandates are allocated proportionally to the parties. The necessary number of votes for a candidate to be considered the winner is obtained by dividing the number of votes validly cast (only for the parties taking part in the allocating process) to 70 (the number of

members in the Seima who elect by list voting). If after the division there is a remainder, '1' (it is rounded in ascending order) is added to the total value. The number of votes allocated to a list is divided to the electoral quota and thus it is obtained the number of seats for each party. The unallocated mandates are allotted according to the value of the remainders.

Once the number of mandates allocated to each list has been established, the mandates are being allocated among the candidates of the same list. In the beginning, it is established, for every candidate, the number of preferential votes received by each. If this number is higher than the number of the members of the Parliament who are being elected at the level of the multi-member constituency (70) or it is equal to this, 'the electoral quota' of the candidate is equal to that particular number. If it is smaller, 'the electoral quota' is '0'. Then, the total number of points is calculated for each candidate, which is the result between 'the electoral quota' and 'the party quota' and which is established in accordance with the place the candidate holds on the party list. The mandates are allocated to the candidates in the descending order of the total number of points obtained for each of them.

## Luxembourg

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament is unicameral and it is formed of 60 members, elected on a five-year term.

### The type of the electoral system used

The proportional representation multiple voting system is used for the elections in four electoral constituencies: North - 9 deputies, South - 23 deputies, Centre - 21 deputies, East - 7 deputies.

### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

Each elector has a number of votes equal to the number of mandates allocated to the constituency in which he votes. He may choose to vote a certain list (in which case he casts a vote on that particular list) or he may use the votes he has to elect candidates on several lists. In case he votes for a list that includes less candidates than are needed to be elected in the constituency, he has a number of votes equal to the



difference between the number of candidates on that particular list and the number of mandates in the constituency that he may cast to some candidates on other lists. Thus, they can vote for a list or for a person on any other list. Each party obtains as many seats as they are allotted according to the vote allocation method, taking into consideration both the votes for the list and the votes for the individual candidates.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of mandates on the lists is done proportionally with the total number of votes cast on

each list. In the first phase, the total number of votes is divided to the number of deputies to be elected in the constituency plus one, thus obtaining 'the electoral number'. Afterwards, the number of votes obtained by a list is divided to 'the electoral number', resulting into the number of mandates allotted to that list.

If not all the mandates are allotted after this procedure (due to the remainders), a second allocation takes place in the descending order of the remainders. In the second stage, the mandates are allocated to the candidates in the descending order of the number of votes received by each.

## Malta

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament is unicameral and has 65 seats.

### The type of the electoral system used

The electoral system used for the election of the parliament is a proportional representation party list voting system with a single transferable vote, which also assumes a compensation mechanism in certain situations. The ballot is organized in 13 constituencies, each of them electing 5 members of the Parliament.

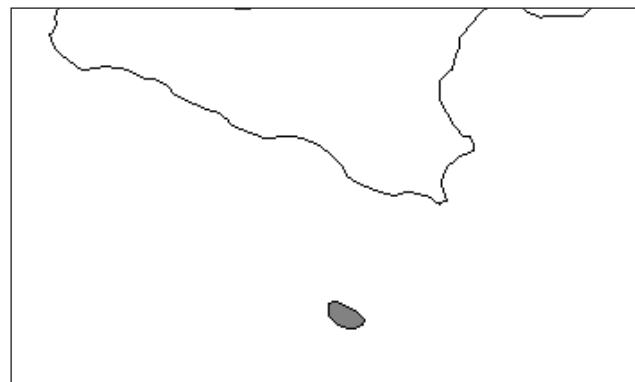
### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

The elector receives a ballot paper, on which all the names of the candidates or the party they represent in the constituency are mentioned. However, unlike Ireland, the candidates are grouped according to the political parties they represent and, the order in which they are placed, within a party's group of candidates, is alphabetical.

The elector has one vote he may transfer from one candidate to the others marking the names of different candidates with 1 - for the first preference, 2 for the second etc. The elector's way of thinking when expressing his preferences, is the following: *'The candidate to whom I would cast my vote is X and I mark his name with 1. If he receives either too many votes and does not need my vote, or too few and he is excluded from the competition, I wish my vote to be transferred to candidate Y and I mark his name with 2. If Y also receives too many votes and does not need my vote or too few and he is excluded from the competition, I wish my vote to be transferred to candidate Z and I mark his name with 3, etc'.* It is worth mentioning that the elector may decide that the transfer of his vote is completed among the candidates of several parties.



### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

First of all, an electoral quota that a candidate must exceed in order to win is established for each constituency. Like in Ireland, it is used the *'droop quota'*, which is calculated as it follows:

$$q = \frac{\text{No. of valid votes}}{\text{No. of mandates} + 1} + 1$$

At the first counting, only the preferences marked with '1' on each ballot paper are taken into consideration and the result of the counting must show how many '1's each candidate benefited from. Once this has been established, it comes out that there is or not a candidate who reaches or exceeds the electoral quota. If there is such a case, that particular candidate wins and the number of votes exceeding the quota is transferred to the other candidates in accordance with the percentage represented by the preferences marked with '2' in their favor on all the ballot papers of the winning candidate. If there is not such a candidate who reached or exceeded the electoral quota, the candidate placed on the last position at the first counting is excluded from the competition and his votes are transferred to the other candidates, according to the same criteria above-mentioned. The second counting takes into consideration the preferences marked with '2' and those marked with '1' transferred to the elected candidate or the one who was excluded after the first counting. At the end of this second counting, the same procedure is followed and it continues until all the mandates are allocated.

In case a political party obtains more than 50% of the votes after the first counting, but the mandates allocated to his representatives do not represent in the end 50% of the Parliament, the number of mandates will be supplemented so that the particular party should obtain an extra mandate than the total number of mandates obtained by the other competitors. This type

of compensation is also applied when only two parties in the competition obtain mandates, in favor of the party that obtained the largest number of votes. The winning candidates belong to that particular party that obtained the largest number of votes, without having been elected, regardless of the constituency where they candidate

## Netherlands

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Dutch parliament is bicameral with the Tweede Kamer (the second Chamber) that has 150 members and the Eerste Kamer (the first Chamber) with 75 members. The members are elected for four-year terms for both chambers.

### The type of the electoral system used

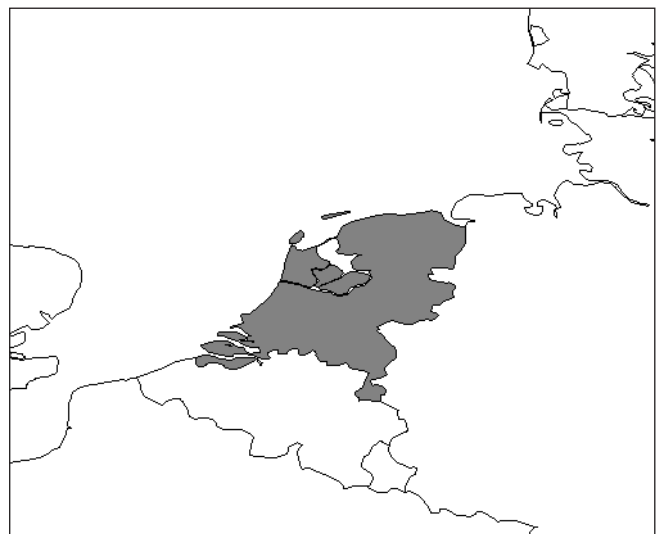
For the election of the lower Chamber (more important than the other, due to the fact that it is the only one that can pass laws) it is used a proportional representation party list system, with list voting and preferential vote organized at the level of a single constituency (which is the territory of the country).

The members of the higher Chamber are elected indirectly by a body of electors formed of the representatives of the regional councils, using the same proportional representation party list system and the preferential vote.

- the seats are allocated at national level among on the different lists or groups of lists that obtained a minimum of 0, 67%; each receives a number of seats equal to the exact number of times the number of cast votes is a multiple of the representation norm established at national level (the number of votes validly cast in the whole country divided to the 150 seats that must be allocated). Within each list, the seats are allocated among the candidates in accordance with the order in which they appear.
- the allocation of the remaining mandates is done according to the d'Hondt method.

### The electoral threshold

For the lower Chamber, there is a threshold of 0, 67% of the votes validly cast (a percentage corresponding to the votes necessary to the election of a candidate).



### How the elector votes

At the elections for the lower Chamber, each elector has the right to vote a list of candidates, and also casting a preferential vote to one of the candidates on that particular list.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

For the lower Chamber, the mandates are allocated at national level among the different lists that reach the 0, 67% threshold of the votes validly cast. In order to do so, the number of votes received by each list is divided to 0, 67% which results into a number of mandates allocated to each list. For the rest, the following procedure is applied:

- if the number of mandates that are left to be allocated is at least equal to 19, the highest averages method (d'Hondt) is used: the remainder for each list after the above-mentioned operation, is divided to a number of divisors (1, 2, 3...) equal to the number of mandates left to allocate, and the quotients obtained for all the list are placed in descending order, with one mandate corresponding to one quotient, until the all mandates are allotted;

- if the number of mandates is smaller than 19, the largest remainder method is used: the remainders of the above-mentioned division are placed in descending order, with one mandate corresponding to each remainder, until all the mandates are allocated.

Once the number of mandates allocated on each list is established, they are allotted to the candidates, generally in the order they are positioned on that

particular list. However, if a candidate obtains a number of preferential votes at least equal to a quarter of the electoral threshold, he is declared to be the winner even ahead of the candidates placed on higher positions on the list he also appears (and who do not obtain this quota).

## Poland

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Polish Parliament is bicameral with the Sejm (the lower Chamber) and the Senate (the higher Chamber). The Sejm has 460 members and the Senate, 100 members.

### The type of the electoral system used

The electoral system used for the election of Sejm is a proportional representation party list system and a mandatory preferential vote organized at the level of some multi-member electoral constituencies. The constituencies are organized at the level of the voivodships or at that of some divisions of these, the main rule used to establish the 'borders' of the constituencies is that these borders cannot break off or cross those of the counties or the towns that have a county status in the electoral legislation and that form the territory of a voivodship. In other words, an electoral constituency can include only entire counties and towns (as those above-mentioned) and not their subdivisions. The size of a constituency must be as large as to allow seven deputies to be elected in the Sejm.

The senators are elected by a system based on the majority principle, in established constituencies so that between 2 and 4 senators are elected in each of them. In every electoral constituency, each electoral committee (representing a political party, apolitical alliance, etc) may propose a number of candidates at most equal to the number of senators that must be elected in that particular constituency.

### The electoral threshold

As far as the elections for the Sejm are concerned, the electoral threshold for the political parties is of 5% and



of 8% for the coalition, of the votes validly cast nationwide.

There is no electoral threshold for the Senate.

### How the elector votes

At the elections for the Sejm, the elector must choose a list of candidates of those mentioned on the ballot paper, marking (with an 'X') the name of one of the candidates on that list (if he marks the names of two candidates or more or if it is not clear to which of the candidates his vote was cast, this is annulled).

A for the senate elections, the elector must vote a number of candidates equal to at most the number of senators elected in that constituency, by marking with an 'X' their names; he must use the ballot paper on which all the candidates in the constituency are written in alphabetical order (regardless of their political affiliation).



## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

For the Sejm, the allocation of mandates is established at the electoral constituency level, as it follows:

- after the data from all the polling stations on the territory of the constituency have been gathered, the Electoral Office of Constituency totalizes the votes received on every list of candidates at the constituency level;
- the number of votes cast on every list of candidates is divided to 1,4; 3, 5, 7... until the number of divisors is equal to the number of mandates to allocate;
- the quotients obtained after the division operation is completed with those particular divisors for all the lists of candidates in the constituency are placed in descending order, each quotient receiving a mandate until the total number of mandates is allotted (in which case, for the allocation of the last mandate, it comes out that there are several lists of candidates to whom equal quotients correspond, the mandate is allocated to the list that obtained the largest number of votes);
- once the number of mandates that must be allocated to each list is established, the

mandates are allotted to the candidates in the descending order of the votes obtained by each; in case there are two or more candidates on the same list who obtain the same number of votes, the mandate is allocated in accordance with the number of polling stations where each candidate obtained a larger number of votes than the others; in case, following this criterion, two or more candidates have an equal number of votes, the person who represented, in front of the electoral office of constituency, 'the electoral committee' which proposed that particular list, at the moment of list submission, decides to whom of the candidates the mandate is to be allocated.

Whereas the elections for the Senate are concerned, in each electoral constituency, after the candidates have been positioned in the descending order of the cast votes, they are declared to be the winners in the 'ranking' in equal number to the number of mandates to be allocated. In case there are two or more candidates who obtained the same number of votes, their order is established according to the number of polling stations where each candidate obtained a larger number of votes than the other(s).

## Portugal

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament of the Republic is unicameral and it is formed of 230 representatives elected on four-year terms.

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are held based on a proportional representation party list electoral system with blocked list.

A number of 226 members of the Parliament are elected within electoral constituencies, which correspond to the administrative units. The number of mandates that are allocated to a constituency is proportional to the number of electors in that constituency and is established with the help of the d'Hondt method (the highest averages). Four mandates are allocated at the level of two electoral constituencies for the citizens with the right to vote who live abroad- one for the Portuguese citizens resident in the member countries of the European Union, for



whom 2 mandates are allocated and another one for the citizens living in the other countries, the Macao region included.



### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

The elector's vote is taken into consideration only when he marks the preferred list of candidates with an 'X'. The number of candidates present on a list must be equal to the number of mandates allocated to the constituency for which that particular list is proposed. This number cannot be smaller than two or higher than five.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The votes cast by the electors are turned into mandates using the d'Hondt method: after the votes cast on every list at the level of the constituency are totalized, the number of votes corresponding to each list is divided, successively to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ...n ('n' is the number of mandates in the constituency), then the quotients are placed in descending order corresponding to every list, with a mandate corresponding to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated.

## The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Parliament in London has two houses: the House of Lords, with 724 members (in 2005) and the House of Commons, with 646 members. The elections are only held for the House of Commons, as the seats in the House of Lords are either inherited or appointed by the Queen.

### The type of the electoral system used

On the territory of great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) the members of the House of Commons are elected by a plurality voting system with one round, organized in single member constituencies and also known as 'first past the post' (it came from horse racing, where the winner of the race is the first to pass a particular point on the track - the finish line, all the others who cross the line after him automatically lose the race) or 'the winner takes it all' (although this last name is also valid for other plurality party list systems). A political party is entitled to one candidate in each electoral constituency.

In Northern Ireland, the elections are organized based on the *single transferable vote system*, used in Ireland.

### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.



### How the elector votes

The elector receives a ballot paper on which the names of all candidates in the constituency are written, specifying the party they represent; the elector has the right to one vote only which he may cast to the preferred candidate (or party) by marking the name with an 'X'.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

In each constituency, it wins the candidate who has the largest number of votes, which do not necessarily have to represent at least 50% of the votes validly cast.

## Slovakia

### The type and structure of the Parliament

Slovakia has a unicameral parliament, called 'The National Council of the Republic of Slovakia' and formed of 150 deputies.

### The type of the electoral system used

In Slovakia, the Parliament is elected by proportional representation party list system and preferential vote, organized at the level of one electoral constituency, established for the entire territory.

### The electoral threshold

In order to enter the parliament, a political party must have 5% of the votes validly cast nation-wide.

### How the elector votes

Each elector has a ballot paper for each political party in the electoral competition, on which the list with the names of the candidates proposed by the party, is written in the order established by the party. Once he has entered the ballot booth the elector must place the ballot paper with the list he wishes to vote in the envelope. Before that, he may cast preferential votes for a maximum of four candidates on that list (which is not mandatory).

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

After the number of votes validly cast is established, the electoral quota is calculated:  $q = \frac{\text{number of votes validly cast}}{\text{number of mandates} + 1}$ .



votes validly cast/151 (the number of mandates+1). The number of mandates obtained by each party is initially equal to the number of votes validly cast on its list divided to the electoral quota. Then, the unallocated seats are allotted by using the largest remainder method (these are the remainders left after the number of votes validly cast, for each party, in its favor has been divided to the quota, with a mandate allocated to each remainder, in descending order, until all the mandates are allotted).

After the number of mandates allocated to each party has been established, it is decided which candidates on the list get the mandates. Thus, the candidates who receive preferential votes at least 10% of the total number of votes validly cast and obtained by the party they candidated for, are given priority in the mandate allocation, in the descending order of the number of cast votes. The remainders of the mandates are allocated in accordance with the order established on the list.

## Slovenia

### The type and structure of the Parliament

Slovenia has a unicameral parliament called 'The National Assembly', formed of 90 deputies.

### The type of the electoral system used

The parliament is elected by proportional representation voting system with a closed party list, organized at the level of eight electoral constituencies. A constituency is divided in 11 regions, one for each of the candidates on the list of a party (in a constituency, the 11 candidates on the list of a party are distributed each in one region).



Two special constituencies are established for the national minorities-Italian and Hungarian, which have the right, each, to one deputy mandate.

## The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold, but the political parties, which do not obtain at least three mandates nationwide after the first stage of mandate allocation (which result from dividing the number of votes validly cast by each party, at the constituency level, to the electoral quota of the constituency), do not participate in the second stage of allocating the remainder of the mandates based on the remainder of the votes from the first stage.

## How the elector votes

The elector receives several ballot papers, one for each political party and an envelope. The name of the candidate distributed in that particular region, as well as the name of the party he represents are on the ballot paper corresponding to a political party (this party has put forward, at the level of the constituency, the list on which that candidate appears). He will cast his vote by placing one of the ballot papers in the envelope, and then will put the envelope in the ballot box.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of the mandates by the political parties that take part in the elections is done at the level of the eight electoral constituencies. For each, it is established an electoral quota of the constituency  $q = \frac{\text{number of votes validly cast in the constituency}}{\text{number of mandates in the constituency}}$  (11). Then, the number of votes obtained on a list in all the 11 regions (by cumulating the number of votes obtained by the 11 candidates in that region) is divided to the electoral quota, which results into a first round of mandates allocated on each list. For the unallocated mandates, the remainders resulted from the division, the d'Hondt method is applied. The party which does not obtain at least three mandates at national level, after the first operation, will not be taken into consideration in the second stage of the mandate allocation (based on the remainders).

Once the number of mandates allocated to each list is established, these are allotted to the candidates on the lists, in the descending order of the number of votes obtained by each in the region where he was present on the ballot paper (as a representative of the list).

# Spain

## The type and structure of the Parliament

The Spanish Parliament is formed of two chambers: The Chamber of Deputies (Congreso de los Diputados) with 350 members and the Senate with 248 members. The election of the members of the parliament is held, for each chamber, every four years.

## The type of the electoral system used

For the election of the Chamber of Deputies, it is used the proportional representation voting system with a blocked list organized at the level of 50 electoral constituencies.

For the election of the Senate, two systems are used:

- 208 senators are elected directly in 52 multi-member electoral constituencies (with four senators each) by the 'limited voting' system in which every elector does not vote a list but a number of three candidates at most;
- the other 40 senators are elected indirectly by being appointed by the legislative assemblies of the 17 autonomous communities, each of them having the right to choose a senator plus one more for every million inhabitants.



## The electoral threshold

There is a minimum threshold of 3% of the votes validly cast nationwide for the Chamber of Deputies. This is valid for all the actors of the electoral competition, whether they are political parties or independent candidates.

For the Senate, there is no minimum electoral threshold since it depends on the number of the population in the region.

### How the elector votes

As far as the elections for the Chamber of Deputies are concerned, the elector has the right to vote only for a list of candidates in his constituency. For the towns of Ceuta and Melilla, the elector has the possibility to vote for a list or a candidate on a list presented by a party.

For the senators who are elected directly, the elector may vote for a maximum of three candidates in his constituency.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The d'Hondt method (of the highest average) is used to establish the number of mandate that are to be

allocated to each list of candidates: the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to the number of divisors (1, 2, 3...) equal to the number of mandates to be allocated, then the quotients obtained for every list of candidates are placed in descending order, with a mandate corresponding to each quotient in the same order, until all the mandates are allocated. For the towns of Ceuta and Melilla, where one deputy is elected, the mandate is allocated to the candidate who obtains the largest number of votes.

As for the senators who are elected directly, the allocation of the four mandates of each constituency is made in favor of the candidates who obtain the largest number of votes in the descending order of the number of votes cast to each of them.

## Sweden

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen) is unicameral with a number of 349 deputies elected directly on a four-year term.

### The type of the electoral system used

The electoral system used is proportional representation party list system and a preferential (optional) vote, organized at the level of 29 electoral constituencies that correspond to the administrative regions.

### The electoral threshold

There are two levels of electoral threshold:

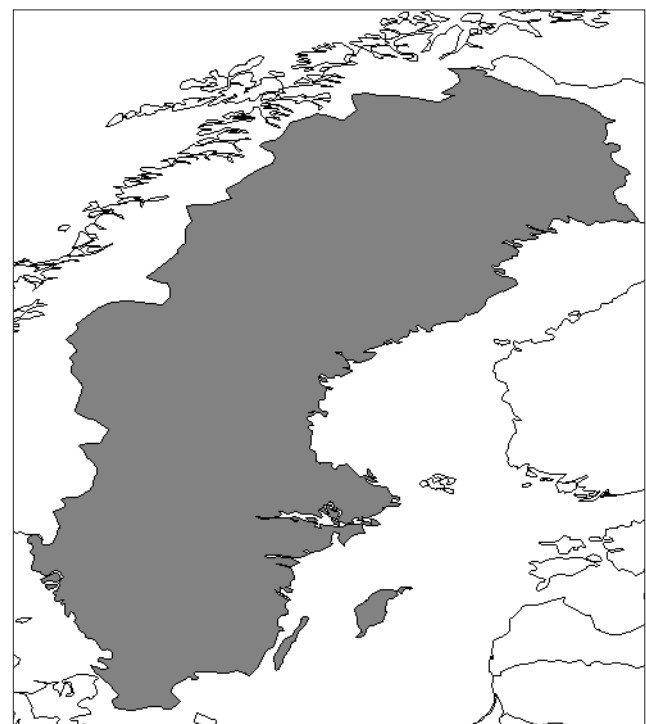
- at national level, 4% of the votes validly cast to a political party
- at constituency level, 12% of the votes validly cast to a political party.

### How the elector votes

The elector must choose a list of candidates (of a political party) having the possibility to express his difference for one of the candidates on that list, by marking his name.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

In the first phase, 310 mandates are allocated at the level of the 29 constituencies. In order to do so, the



'modified Saint-Lague method' is applied in every constituency which assumes to divide the total number of votes obtained by each political party to a series of divisors beginning with 1, 4, 3, 5, etc. in equal number to the number of mandates to be allocated, then the placing of all the quotients obtained by all the parties in descending order and the allocation of one mandate corresponding to one quotient until all the mandates in the constituency are allotted. In each electoral constituency, only the political parties that reach the 12% threshold of the votes validly cast at the constituency level take part in this stage.

The other 39 mandates are allocated nation-wide so that there is a proportional relation as correct as possible between the number of votes cast to the parties at national level and the number of seats that the parties are about to hold in Parliament. Thus, for each political party, based on the number of votes obtained on the party lists cumulated at national level, it is established how many of the 349 mandates should be allocated to that particular party if the entire territory were one electoral constituency (by using the same 'modified Saint Lague method'). The number of mandates already obtained by the party at the constituency level is subtracted from the number of mandates resulted from the previous operation, which results into the number of mandates of the 39 which are to be allocated to each party. Only the political parties which reach the 4% threshold of the votes validly cast take part in this phase.

Once the number of mandates to be allocated to each political party and implicitly, to each list of candidates in every constituency, is established the mandates are allocated among the candidates of the same list. In the first stage, only the candidates who obtain a number of personalized votes (preferential votes) equal to at least 8% of the votes validly cast in favor of that particular list, are taken into consideration and they are allocated the mandates in the reversed order of the number of personalized votes obtained by each of them until all the mandates are allotted. If not all the mandates allocated to the list 9 the number of candidates on the list who obtain at least 8% of the votes cast in favor of the list is smaller than the number of mandates allocated to the list) are allotted with the help of this method, the other mandates are distributed according to the place each candidate has on the list.

## Hungary

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The parliament of Hungary is unicameral.

### The type of the electoral system used

The electoral system used is a mixed one, which combines the plurality system with the proportional system: 176 members are elected at the level of the same number of single member constituencies, by single member majority system with two rounds, at most 152 at the level of 20 regional constituencies by organized list voting and at least 58 of the mandates are 'compensatory' and allocated to some of the candidates on the national lists of the parties.

Each party/coalition has the right to propose:

- one candidate in each of the 176 single member constituencies;
- one list of candidates in each of the 20 district constituencies;
- a nation-wide list.

### The electoral threshold

In order that a list of candidates receives mandates, it must benefit of at list 5% of the votes validly cast in the constituency for which it was proposed. The same threshold is established for the parties at national level so that the lists at this level could receive mandates.



### How the elector votes

Each elector has two votes; one he can offer a candidate in the single member constituency and the other he can cast to a list at the level of the district constituency.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The mandates are allocated in three stages:

- a) first, the winning candidates are those who obtain at least 50 % of the votes in the first round, in the 176 single member constituencies provided that at least half of the number of enlisted electors took part in the elections. If the requirement related to



the electors' participation to the ballot in the first round, in a single member constituency, is not met, then a second round is organized, allowing all the candidates of the first round to take part in, whereas the winning candidate is the one who obtains the largest number of votes, providing that 25% of the eligible citizens have voted. Also, if in the first round, none of the candidates obtains the absolute majority of the votes, a second round is organized in which all the candidates who obtained 15% of the votes validly cast in the first round, may take part and the candidate who obtains the largest number of votes, provided that 25% of the eligible citizens have voted, is declared to be the winner;

b) secondly, the number of mandates that are allocated to each district list is established by dividing the number of votes validly cast on each list to the quota number calculated in accordance with the following formula:

$$q = \frac{\text{No. of valid votes}}{\text{No. of mandates} + 1} + 1$$

and then taking out the whole part of the quotient.

c) thirdly, the votes cast in the first round declared to be valid in favor of the candidates who, at the level of the single member constituencies did not win the elections, are added, for each party/coalition at national level to the votes representing the remainders of the division of the second phase. Based on the result, the number of mandates that are allocated to each list of candidates of those proposed at national level, is established proportionally.

## Bulgaria

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Bulgarian parliament is unicameral and has a number of 240 members, elected on a four year term.

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are held based on a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list, organized at the level of 31 electoral constituencies, among which three are founded in Sofia and two in Plovdiv (the other 26 constituencies correspond to the administrative regions).

### The electoral threshold

In order to participate in the allocation of mandates in the first stage (at the level of the 26 constituencies), within a constituency, a political party or an independent candidate must reach an electoral threshold equal to the result from the number of votes validly cast in that particular constituency to the number of mandates allocated to the constituency.

In the second stage, in which the unallocated mandates of the first stage are now allotted at national level, a political party can only be included if the votes it obtained represent at least 1, 8% of the votes cast at national level. For the coalitions, the threshold in this



stage is of 10% whereas the independent candidates are denied access to this stage.

### How the elector votes

The elector must vote a list of candidates among those that are proposed for his constituency, having the possibility to express his preference for one of the candidates within that particular list.

## How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of mandates is done in two stages:

In **the first stage**, the number of votes validly cast is divided, for each electoral constituency, to the number of mandates in the constituency. The result represents 'the electoral quota' for that particular constituency. The number of votes validly cast for each list is divided to this quota, which leads to a prime number of mandates received by each list (representing the whole part of the quotient).

In **the second stage**, the remainders resulted from the division in the first stage (the votes that were not used in the first stage), are cumulated at national level, for each

party/coalition (which exceeded the threshold to take part in this stage). The resulting number for each party/coalition is divided to the result of the division between the total number of votes cumulated at national level (representing the remainders resulted from the first stage) and the number of mandates to be allocated. This results into the number of mandates allocated, at this level, to each party or coalition. If there are still mandates to allocate, they are allotted to the parties/coalitions in the reversed order of the remainders corresponding to them. The mandates allocated in the second stage are distributed to the parties/coalitions lists in the constituencies where the parties or coalitions obtained the largest number of votes.

## Romania

### The type and structure of the Parliament

The Romanian Parliament is bicameral formed of the Chamber of Deputies, with 332 members and the Senate, with 137 members.

### The type of the electoral system used

For both Chambers, the elections are held based on a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list, organized at the level of 42 electoral constituencies, among which one is represented by Bucharest.

### The electoral threshold

For a political party, the electoral threshold for the parliament is of 5%. For the political alliances and the electoral alliances, 3% is added to that of 5% for the second party and 1% for the next parties starting with the third, without exceeding 10% of the total number of votes validly cast.

Under the constitutional provisions, the organizations of the national minorities that are legally founded have the right to at least one representative in the Chamber of Deputies. However, in order to obtain a seat in this Chamber, the list of candidates of such an organization must be cast, in the elections, at national level, a number of votes at least equal to 10% of the electoral quota nation-wide (the total number of votes validly cast at national level divided to the number of deputies).



### How the elector votes

At the polling station, the elector receives two ballot papers, one for the Chamber of Deputies and the other for the Senate. On which of these ballot papers, the elector must stamp the list of candidates he wishes to vote.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of mandates is done in two stages. In the first stage, the mandates are allocated at the level of each of the 42 constituencies as it follows:

- for each electoral constituency, the electoral quota is established by dividing the number of votes validly cast in that particular

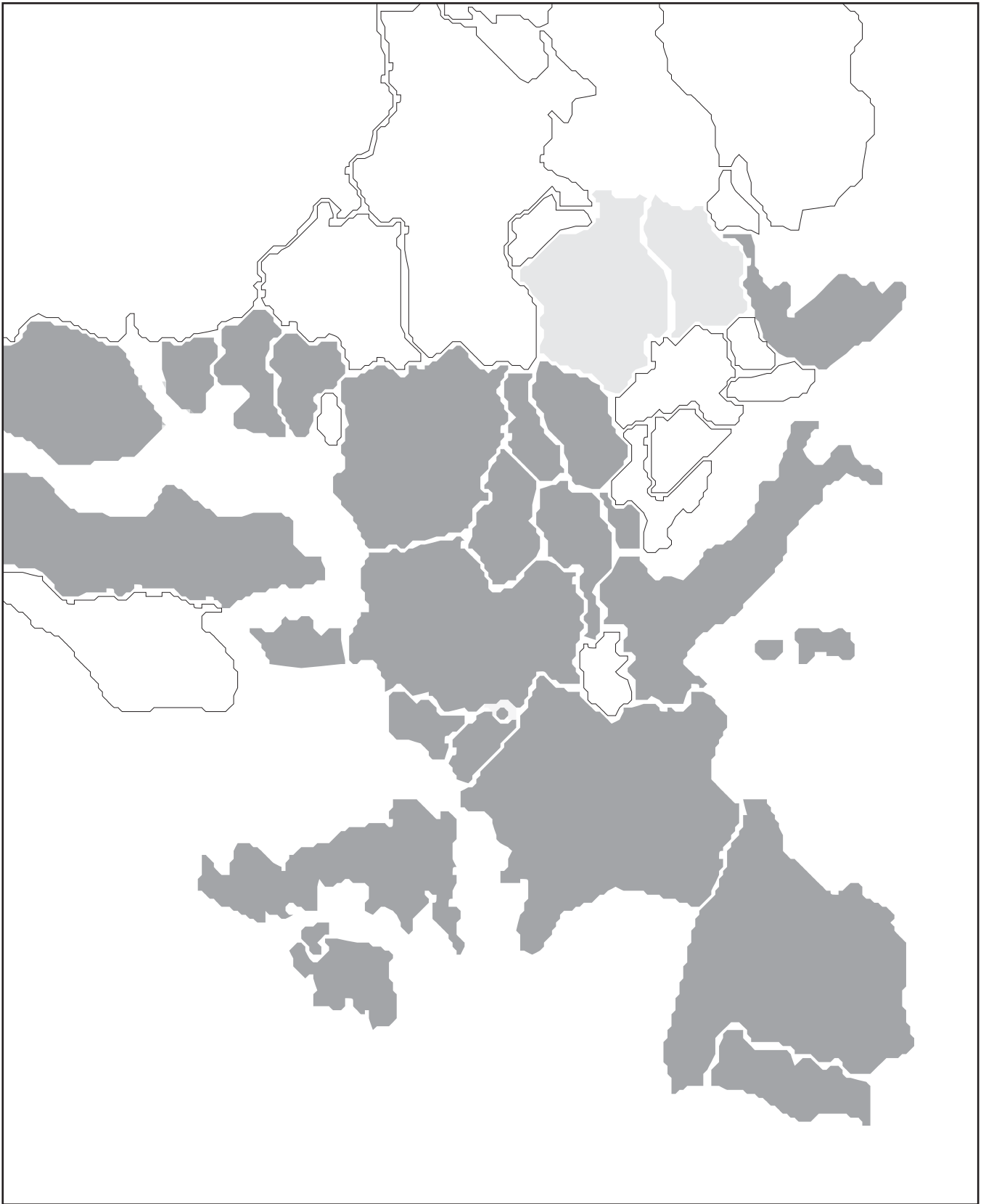
constituency to the number of mandates allocated to that constituency;

- for each list of candidates, the number of cast votes is divided to the electoral quota; the whole part of the quotient in this operation represents a prime number of mandates which that particular list receives.

In the second stage, a second amount of mandates are allocated at national level, by using the d'Hondt method:

- for each party, the remainders resulted from this division of the first stage are cumulated at national level;
- thus the obtained number for each party is divided to a number of consecutive, whole divisors (1, 2, 3...) equal in number to the number of allocated mandates;

- the quotients obtained from the division performed on every list are placed in descending order (without taking into consideration the lists to which they correspond) and, in the same order, a mandate corresponds to a quotient until all the mandates are allocated;
  - the resulting mandates are allocated to the parties in certain constituencies, according to the descending order of the remainders in those particular constituencies.
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# Voting systems used in the elections for the European Parliament

One important aspect to be kept in mind regarding the electoral systems used in the 25 countries members of the European Union in the elections for the European Parliament is that they are all proportional representation systems. This is the consequence of a recommendation of the European Council, where the most important part is the one which stipulates that *'the election of the representatives of the European Parliament must be held based either on a list voting system or on a single transferable vote system'*. It must be noticed that, in the elections for the European Parliament, the issue of the electorate's representation in a constituency is not important (the majority voting systems or those based on the single member constituency are the most efficient due to that) since the member of the Parliament is the representative of his country in this forum as well as the representative of the political party for which he candidates in one of the parliamentary groups.

The other two recommendations also refer to important aspects: one regards the fact that, in the European elections, the country's territory can be subdivided in several constituencies only if this does not seriously affect the proportional character of the results of the elections and the second considers the fact that the electoral threshold must not exceed 5%.

Thus, as one can see in the table presented below, most of the countries chose a proportional representation party list system and preferential vote. It

is interesting to notice that France and Great Britain, countries where the elections for the national parliaments use majority systems, but also Germany, where a voting system with personalized selection is used for the election of the federal Parliament, for the appointment of their representatives in the European Parliament they chose a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list, which allows the lowest level of involvement on the elector's account in the selection of those who want to be elected. It can also be noticed that all the countries that use proportional representation party list systems with open lists for the national legislative elections (systems which involve a substantial involvement of the elector in the candidates' selection) have given up on using these systems in the elections for the European Parliament for reasons of simplicity, some of the countries even in favor of the proportional representation party list system with a blocked list (like Estonia, for instance).

It is also worth mentioning that the countries where the single transferable vote system is used, such as it is the case of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Malta, kept this system for the European elections as well.

In the following table, there is centralized classification of the electoral systems used in the 25 countries members of the European Union in the elections for the European Parliament, according to the different voting systems.



Country	The type of the electoral system							
	proportional with a blocked list		Proportional with an unblocked list				With single transferable vote	
			closed and with optional preferential vote(s)	in a single constituency	in several constituencies	open with multiple vote	in a single constituency	in several constituencies
	in a single constituency	in several constituencies						
Austria			•					
Belgium					•			
Czech Republic			•					
Cyprus			•					
Denmark			•					
Estonia	•							
Finland					•			
France		•						
Germany		•						
Greece			•					
Ireland								•
Italy		•						
Latvia			•					
Lithuania			•					
Luxembourg				•				
Malta							•	
Netherlands			•					
Poland		•						
Portugal	•							
United Kingdom		•						
Slovakia	•							
Slovenia			•					
Spain	•							
Sweden			•					
Hungary	•							

## Austria

### Seats in the European Parliament - 21

#### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are organized based on the proportional representation party list system and the preferential vote, organized in one electoral constituency at the level of the entire federal territory.

#### The electoral threshold

The lists of candidates who obtain less than 4% of the votes do not qualify for the allocation of mandates.

#### How the elector votes

The elector has only one vote he casts either to a list with all those mentioned on that particular list, or to a candidate on that list.

#### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of mandates to the political parties is done with the help of the d'Hondt algorithm.

Within each party, the mandates are allocated to the candidates on the list, according to the number of preferential votes obtained by each of them, of the total number of votes cast in favor of that particular party.

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## Belgium

### Seats in the European Parliament - 24

#### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are organized based on the proportional representation party list system and preferential vote.

Out of the 24 representatives of Belgium in the European parliament, a certain number (pre-established) is elected by the Flemish Electoral College, another one by the French Electoral College and, usually, one by the German Electoral College.

Under the new federal organization of the state, the elections for the European parliament are organized in the next four electoral constituencies:

1. the Flemish constituency, formed of the administrative districts that belong to the Flemish region, except for Hal-Vilvorde;
2. the Walloon constituency, formed of the administrative districts of the Walloon region except for the municipalities in the area of the German speaking regions;
3. the electorate formed of the administrative districts in the Brussels and Hal-Vilvorde areas;
4. the electorate in the German speaking regions.

Also, there are three electoral colleges: the French, the Flemish and the German. The persons who are enlisted in the electoral area Brussels-Hal-Vilvorde can choose the French Electoral College or the Flemish Electoral College.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no minimum electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The electors have one vote they cast either to a list of candidates or a certain candidate on a list.

#### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The mandates are allocated to the political parties and alliances by proportional representation, using the d'Hondt system (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated). Within the same party, the mandates are allocated among the candidates according to the number of preferential votes cast to each candidate.

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## Czech Republic

### Seats in the European Parliament - 24

#### The type of the electoral system used

The representatives of Czechia in the European Parliament are elected by proportional representation party list system and preferential vote.

#### The electoral threshold

Only the parties that obtained at least 5% of the votes validly cast take part in the mandate allocation.

#### How the elector votes

The elector votes for a list, within he has the right to express a preferential vote in favor of a candidate.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The method used for the mandate allocation is the d'Hondt formula applied at the level of the national constituency (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5....then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated).

The mandates that are allocated to a list are allotted to the candidates in descending order to the number of preferential votes received by each of them, and then when the preferential votes do not emphasize any difference among the candidates, the position on which each candidate was placed on the list by the party that proposed the list, is taken into consideration.

## Cyprus

### Seats in the European Parliament - 6

#### The type of the electoral system used

For the election of the 6 euro-members of the Parliament, the territory of Cyprus represents one single constituency, at which level there are organized elections by the proportional representation party list system and preferential vote.

#### The electoral threshold

1.8% represents the percentage of votes cast at national level and necessary to obtain a mandate.

#### How the elector votes

Each elector must vote a list of candidates on which, he can, also cast two preferential votes.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The results are established by calculating an electoral quota (Hare) to which the number of votes cast on every list is reported and which results into a prime number of mandates. The other mandates correspond one by one to the remainders of this division and are placed in descending order.

The mandates allocated to a list are allotted to the candidates according to the number of preferential votes obtained by each of them and by the order in which they were positioned on the list.

## Denmark

### Seats in the European Parliament - 14

#### The type of the electoral system used

The continental territory of Denmark represents a constituency where the elections are organized by

proportional representation party list system with preferential vote. The Population of the Faeroes and Greenland each form a constituency where a candidate is elected.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no minimum electoral threshold.

**How the elector votes**

Each elector has one vote he either casts to a list with all those mentioned on it or to a certain candidate on that list.

**How the results are established and the mandates allocated**

The seats are allocated by proportional representation using the d'Hondt system (the number of votes

received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated) and the candidates of the same list according to the number of preferential votes obtained by each of them and the order in which they were positioned on the list. As for the Faeroes and Greenland constituencies (single member), the candidates with the largest number of votes on the individual lists are elected.

**Estonia****Seats in the European Parliament - 6****The type of the electoral system used**

There is only one constituency in Estonia, and the elections are organized at its level by a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list.

**The electoral threshold**

There is no minimum electoral threshold.

**How the elector votes**

Each elector has the right to one vote only which he can cast to a certain list.

**How the results are established and the mandates allocated**

The mandates are allocated proportionally to the member of votes received on each list, by using the d'Hondt method (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5....then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated) and within each list, the seats are allocated according to the order in which the names of the candidates appear on the list.

**Finland****Seats in the European Parliament - 14****The type of the electoral system used**

In order to hold the 14 seats, the elections are organized at the level of 4 electoral constituencies south, west, north and east. The system used is a proportional representation party list system and preferential vote.

**The electoral threshold**

There is no minimum electoral threshold.

**How the elector votes**

The voter has the right to one vote for a certain list and to a preferential vote for a candidate on that list.

**How the results are established and the mandates allocated**

The number of mandates allocated to each list is established by the d'Hondt method (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated). When the number of seats allocated to each party or association of electors is established, the candidates on the lists receive mandates in the descending order or the preferential votes received by each of them.

## France

### Seats in the European Parliament - 78

#### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are organized by a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list since the territory is divided into 8 electoral constituencies. The size of the constituencies varies between no less than 3 seats and no more than 14 seats.

#### The electoral threshold

There is an electoral threshold of 5% for each constituency.

#### How the elector votes

The electors have one vote which they can cast to a list.

#### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of mandates allocated to each constituency is proportional to their population by using the largest remainders method.

The allocation of the mandates for the different lists of candidates is done by using the d'Hondt method (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated) and within a list, the allocation is done based on the order in which the names appear on the lists.

## Germany

### Seats in the European Parliament - 99

#### The type of the electoral system used

The 99 members are elected both at the land level and at the federal level, each party having the possibility to choose to which of the two levels to propose lists.

#### The electoral threshold

An electoral actor must receive at least 5% of the votes cast at national level.

#### How the elector votes

The elector has only one vote for one of the lists.

#### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The representation is proportional and the votes are counted for each party at federal level. When a party proposes lists at the land level, the total number of mandates won by that party is divided among those particular lists by using the Hare-Niemeyer system. For each list, the mandates are allocated to the candidates according to the order in which they are placed on that particular list.

## Greece

### Seats in the European Parliament - 24

#### The type of the electoral system used

The electoral system is the proportional representation party list system with a blocked list, organized at the level of a single national electoral constituency.

#### The electoral threshold

The political parties must obtain 3% of the votes cast at national level to have representatives in the European Parliament.

#### How the elector votes

For the election of the members of the European Parliament each elector has the right to a single vote which he can cast for a certain list.



### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The mandates are allocated proportionally to the number of votes cast on every list. In the first phase, the formula  $q = (\text{the total number of votes} / \text{the total number of votes} + 1)$  is calculated and it is divided to the number of votes of each list, which results into a prime number

of mandates. The other mandates result from the placing of the remainders of the operation in the descending order with a mandate corresponding to each quotient.

Once the number of the mandates for each list, these are allocated to the candidates in the order in which they are positioned on that particular list.

## Ireland

### Seats in the European Parliament - 13

#### The type of the electoral system used

The election of the members of the European Parliament is done by single transferable vote applied within the four electoral constituencies.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no minimum electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The names of the candidates appear on the list in alphabetical order, each elector has the right to a vote which he can transfer from one candidate (who totalizes several votes than he needs in order to be elected or too few votes to be elected) to another, in an

order he establishes by marking the names of the candidates with 1, 2, 3, ... in the descending order of his preferences.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The alphabetical order in which the candidates are placed on the electoral lists does not influence the order in which the seats are allocated. In order to be elected, the candidates must obtain a pre-established quota of the votes and obtained by dividing the total number of votes to the number of seats plus 1, then adding 1 to the result. The seats are allocated to the candidates on the lists who obtained, either in the first counting, or in the successive transfer of votes completed in accordance with the preferences expressed by the electors, a number of votes larger than that particular quota.

## Italy

### Seats in the European Parliament - 78

#### The type of the electoral system used

The system used in Italy is a proportional representation party list system and preferential votes.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The elector votes a party list, also having the right to a preferential number of votes for the candidates on that particular list, as it follows: 3 in the electoral district of the North West, 2 in the North-East, Centre and South, and one vote in the islands. There is a special rule for the votes cast in the areas with linguistic minorities.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The votes are counted and the seats are allocated at national level where a quota is established to determine the number of votes needed to obtain a seat. If a list obtains an insufficient number of votes in an electoral district, to reach that particular quota, the votes obtained on that list are transferred to a district where the list of that particular party obtained the relative majority of the votes. Thus, all the parties benefit from a redistribution of the votes at national level.

The candidates who obtain the largest number of cast preferential votes, in their descending order, benefit from the mandates allocated to each political party.

## Latvia

### Seats in the European Parliament - 9

#### The type of the electoral system used

The system by which the nine representatives of Latvia in the European Parliament is a proportional representation party list system and preferential votes, similar to that used for the election of the national parliament.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The elector votes a list having the right to express preferential votes for certain candidates and 'negative votes' for the others.

#### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of mandates that are allocated to each list are established by the Sainte-Lague method (the number of votes corresponding to each list is divided through successively odd numbers in equal number to the number of mandates, then the results for all the lists are placed in descending order, with a mandate corresponding to each quotient, until all the mandates are allocated).

Once the number of mandates allocated to each list is established, those mandates are allotted to the candidates on the list in an order determined by the number of preferential votes and the number of 'negative' votes received by each of the candidates.

## Lithuania

### Seats in the European Parliament - 13

#### The type of the electoral system used

The 13 members of the European Parliament are appointed within a single electoral constituency that covers the entire territory of Lithuania, by a proportional representation party list system and preferential votes.

#### The electoral threshold

The electoral threshold is of 5%.

#### How the elector votes

Each elector has the right to a vote for a certain list, having the possibility to vote for a certain candidate, on the same list.

#### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of mandates obtained by each list is divided to a number  $q = (\text{the total number of votes} / \text{the total number of votes} + 1) + 1$  which results into a prime number of mandates. The remainders are placed in descending order each of them having a corresponding mandate, until all the mandates are allocated.

The mandates allocated to a list are distributed to the candidates according to the preferential votes received by each of them and beginning with the moment when these votes do not make any difference among the candidates or the order in which they were placed on the list by the party.

## Luxembourg

### Seats in the European Parliament - 6

#### The type of the electoral system used

The system used is a proportional representation party list system with multiple votes. The entire territory of the country is one electoral constituency.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The elector has a maximum of 6 votes he can cast to some candidates (a maximum of 6) either on the same

list or on different lists. Each list of those proposed by the political parties has a maximum of 12 candidates.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

For the mandate allocation, it is, first of all, established the number of mandates to which every list is entitled by counting the votes cast for its candidates and by

applying the d'Hondt method (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated).

Then, the candidates who receive mandates are established for each list, in the descending order of the number of votes received by every one of them.

## Malta

### Seats in the European Parliament - 5

#### The type of the electoral system used

For the election of the 5 representatives, it is used the same system as the one employed for the country's parliamentary elections: the single transferable vote (see the chapter *Electoral systems used for the election of the parliaments of the 25 + 2 countries*).

#### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The elector has the right to a vote, which he may transfer from one candidate (who cumulates several

votes than he needs in order to be elected or too few to be elected) to another, in an order he establishes by marking the names of the candidates with 1, 2, 3, 4... in the descending order of his preferences (the candidates among whom the vote transfer is completed are able to represent different parties).

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

In order to be elected, the candidates must obtain a pre-established quota from the votes, obtained by dividing the total number of votes to the number of seats plus 1, then adding 1 to the result. The seats are allocated to the candidates on the lists who obtain, either at the first counting, or by successively transferring votes in accordance with the preferences expressed by the electors, a larger number of votes than the quota.

## Netherlands

### Seats in the European Parliament - 27

#### The type of the electoral system used

The 27 members of European Parliament are appointed within a single electoral constituency that covers the entire territory of the country by a proportional representation party list system and preferential vote.

#### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

#### How the elector votes

The elector has the right to vote for a certain list, having the possibility to vote a certain candidate on that particular list.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of mandates obtained by each list is divided to a number  $q = (\text{the total number of votes} / \text{the total number of votes} + 1) + 1$  which results into a prime number of mandates. The remainders are placed in descending order each of them having a corresponding mandate, until all the mandates are allocated.

The mandates allocated to a list are distributed to the candidates according to the preferential votes received by each of them and beginning with the moment when these votes no longer make the difference among the candidates, or the order in which they were placed on the list by the party.

## Poland

**Seats in the European Parliament - 54**

### The type of the electoral system used

In Poland, the European members of the parliament are elected by a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list organized at the level of the 13 electoral constituencies.

### The electoral threshold

In order to have representatives in the European Parliament, a political party or an alliance of parties must obtain at least 5% of the votes validly cast at national level.

### How the elector votes

The elector must vote one of the lists of candidates proposed by the political parties or the alliances in his constituency.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The allocation of mandates is done in two phases. In the first, the votes are counted for each political party or alliance, at the level of the entire country, then using the d'Hondt method, it is established the number of mandates that are allocated to each political party (the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5....then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated). In the second phase, it is determined the number of mandates allocated to each party and alliance in each of the 13 electoral constituencies, using the Hare Niemeyer method.

## Portugal

**Seats in the European Parliament - 24**

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are organized based on a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list organized at the level of the entire country which is an electoral constituency.

### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

The elector must vote one of the lists of candidates on the ballot paper without being able to determine the order of candidates.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of mandates allocated to each list is established by the d'Hondt method: the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5....then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated.

Within each list, the winning candidates are placed in descending order of the position on the list.

## The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

**Seats in the European Parliament - 78**

### The type of the electoral system used

Unlike the elections for the House of Commons (where the majority system with a single member constituency system in one round is used), the elections for the European Parliament are held by proportional

representation party list system with a closed list, organized in 12 electoral constituencies. The exception is, as it is the case of the Westminster elections, Northern Ireland, where for the three seats allocated to this part of the Kingdom the single transferable vote system is used (see Ireland and Malta).

**The electoral threshold**

There is no electoral threshold.

**How the elector votes**

The elector must vote one of the lists of candidates proposed by the political parties.

**How the results are established and the mandates allocated**

The allocation of mandates is done by using the Droop method and that of the largest remainders: the number

of votes obtained by each list is divided to a number  $q = \frac{\text{total number of votes}}{\text{total number of votes} + 1} + 1$  which results into a prime number of mandates; the remainders are placed in descending order each of them having a corresponding mandate, until all the mandates are allocated.

Once the number of mandates allocated to each list is established, these are distributed to the candidates in the order they appear on that particular list.

**Slovakia****Seats in the European Parliament - 14****The type of the electoral system used**

The electoral system is a proportional representation party list system with a closed list in one electoral constituency that covers the entire territory of the country.

**The electoral threshold**

The electoral threshold is of 5%.

**How the elector votes**

The elector must choose one of the lists of candidates proposed by the political parties.

**How the results are established and the mandates allocated**

The allocation of mandates is done by using the Droop method and that of the largest remainders: the number of votes obtained by each list is divided to a number  $q = \frac{\text{total number of votes}}{\text{total number of votes} + 1} + 1$  which results into a prime number of mandates; the remainders are placed in descending order each of them having a corresponding mandate, until all the mandates are allocated.

Once the number of mandates allocated to each list is established, these are distributed to the candidates in the order they appear on that particular list.

**Slovenia****Seats in the European Parliament - 7****The type of the electoral system used**

The 7 members of the European Parliament are elected in one single electoral constituency by using a proportional representation party list system and preferential vote.

**The electoral threshold**

There is no electoral threshold.

**How the elector votes**

The elector must vote one list of candidates and he may cast a vote for a candidate he prefers within that list.

**How the results are established and the mandates allocated**

In the first phase the number of votes allocated to each list of candidates is established by using the d'Hondt method: the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated.

In the second phase, the mandates allocated to each list for the candidates who appear on the list, are allotted according to the number of preferential votes obtained by each of them and the position they had on the list decide by the party that proposed them.



## Spain

**Seats in the European Parliament - 64**

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are organized based on a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list at the level of the entire country which represents one electoral constituency.

### The electoral threshold

There is no electoral threshold.

### How the elector votes

The elector must vote one list of candidates on the ballot

paper, without being able to determine the order of candidates.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of votes allocated to each list of candidates is established by using the d'Hondt method: the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated.

The winning candidates are placed in descending order to the place they had on the list.

## Sweden

**Seats in the European Parliament - 19**

### The type of the electoral system used

In Sweden, the elections for the European Parliament are held based on a proportional representation party list system with closed list and a preferential vote. The entire territory of the country is one electoral constituency.

### The electoral threshold

In Sweden, there is an electoral threshold of 4% that the parties must reach in order to have representatives in the European Parliament.

### How the elector votes

The elector must vote one list of candidates of a political party, having the possibility to cast a preferential vote in favor of the candidates on that list.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The mandates are allocated to each list of candidates by applying the modified Sainte-Lague method: the number of votes validly cast for each list of candidates is divided to 1,4; 3; 5... etc in equal number with the number of mandates that are to be allocated, and then the quotients are placed (the results obtained from this operation for each list) in descending order and the mandates are allotted to the list to which each quotient corresponds until all the mandates are distributed.

The candidates who obtain preferential votes in equal number to the at least 5% of the total number of votes cast on the lists they appear on, go further on the list, taking part in the mandate allocation in the descending order of the number of votes they receive. If, after this criterion has been applied, there are still mandates to allocate, they are allotted to the other candidates, in the descending order of the position they have on the list.

## Hungary

**Seats in the European Parliament - 24**

### The type of the electoral system used

The elections are organized based on a proportional representation party list system with a blocked list, the entire territory representing one electoral constituency.

### The electoral threshold

The electoral threshold is of 5%.

### How the elector votes

The elector must vote one list of candidates on the ballot

paper, without being able to determine the order of candidates.

### How the results are established and the mandates allocated

The number of votes allocated to each list of candidates is established by using the d'Hondt method: the number of votes received on each list of candidates is divided to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ..., then the quotients obtained for all the lists are placed in descending order, in the same order in which each mandate corresponds to each quotient until all the mandates are allocated.

The cycle of papers "*25 +2 electoral models*", published by the Resource Centre for Democracy of Asociația Pro Democratia, contains information, data and comments resulting from the comparative analysis of the electoral legislation in the 25th member states of the European Union and in the two countries candidate for the accession in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania. Each number of this cycle will be dedicated to the study of one of the aspects specific to the electoral mechanism: the voting system used in elections, the actors of the electoral competition, the electoral institutions, the rules of the electoral campaign, practices and procedures particular to the election day, the process of counting the votes and the methods used to establish the results of the voting.

Asociația Pro Democratia had the initiative to pledge through the newly-found Resource Centre for Democracy, to studying the electoral laws in the 27th countries, in order to offer those interested, via a compact study, an overall vision though detailed on the manner elections are organized and held in Europe. Especially addressing people who are directly concerned with the subject - politicians, experts, political scientists, political analysts, journalists, students, etc. - this cycle of papers also represents a reference theoretical basis for the participants to the debate on the electoral reform in Romania.

The first issue of this cycle is called 'Electoral Systems' and contains introductions to the methods of election of the members in the legislative forums of the studied countries as well as of the representatives of these countries in the European Parliament. The survey is summarized around 5 categories of analysis:

1. the structure of the parliament (referring to national parliaments)
2. the type of electoral system used (or, in other words, the category in which that particular system falls)
3. the electoral threshold
4. how the elector votes
5. how the results are established and mandates allocated

Moreover, the paper also includes a chapter presenting a series of references on the subject of the significance of the adoption and use, in one country or another, of the electoral system in force and the role and the importance that electoral system holds in the political life in that particular country.

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